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TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 1999

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SEE THIS SECTION, PAGE 20, FOR DETAILS TOKEN COLLECT

As the world looks on, a family reaps Kosovo's deadly harvest

BY RAYMOND WHITAKER
in Pristina
AND STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

WESTERN POWERS were dragged another step closer to military intervention in the Kosovo crisis yesterday when another massacre, the worst since the killing of 45 civilians at Racak 10 days ago, shattered the four-month cease-fire.

As Christopher Hill, the US peace envoy, arrived to try to restart negotiations between the Serbian authorities and the Albanian community, the bodies of five ethnic Albanians were found in a tractor-trailer in the south-west of the province. The two adults and three children, members of the same family, had been shot with a machine-gun powerful enough to penetrate the tractor's engine block and a handgun. A man and a woman lay sprawled in the cab, both with massive head wounds. Two children, believed to be boys aged 10 and 12, and a man were dead on a pile of corn stalks in the wagon.

The Albanian-run Kosovo Information Centre quoted witnesses as saying a troop carrier of the Yugoslav security forces opened fire on the tractor on Sunday.

An investigative judge from the nearby town of Djakovica came to the scene escorted by police in armoured cars and civilian vehicles. Six vehicles of the Kosovo Verification Mission were also at the scene.

"The bodies look very bad," said Lee House, a member of the mission.

The latest violence has revived demands for military action to be used against the Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic. Nato has already reduced the



A Serbian policeman in Kosovo yesterday approaching the scene where five ethnic Albanians died on Sunday evening in a shooting attributed to Serbian forces. Reuters

stand-by period for military action from 96 to 48 hours. The latest killings may be enough to set the clock ticking. The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, said after a meeting of EU for-

ign ministers in Brussels that they expressed outrage at last week's Racak massacre. "Five more bodies have been found," he said. "I have been in contact with the general in charge of

the British contingent in the Kosovar verification mission and asked for a full report into the circumstances of the latest atrocity." Mr Cook said there was a need to keep alive "the

pressure of a credible military threat" against the Serb regime. But the priority was to bring the Serb leadership and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) round the negotiating

table as soon as possible. Ministers of the Contact Group, meeting in London on Friday, called for a "heavy dose of international pressure, backed by force".

Kosovo had been quiet after the freeing on Saturday of nine KLA members by Yugoslav authorities and the release of five Serbs kidnapped by the KLA. Blame for the latest mas-

sacre was put by Albanians on Serbian security forces. The Serbs said the territory where the bodies were found "is controlled by the separatist so-called KLA". They said a police patrol came under fire from a car yesterday near Glogovac. There was no independent confirmation but it is clear Mr Milosevic's government wants to establish that every provocation is matched.

By yesterday afternoon forensic tags marking entry holes on the tractor and evidence on the ground suggested that another tortuous investigation was under way into whether this was a massacre, as claimed by the KLA.

After the Racak killings Serbia ordered out William Walker, head of the Kosovo "peace verifiers", for denouncing Serbian police for carrying out a massacre. It also refused to allow international war-crimes investigators into the country. After talks, Belgrade agreed to let him stay. Yesterday he reiterated that "unbiased observers" would have no doubt that what happened at Racak was a massacre.

The deaths of another five civilians emphasise the difficulty of Mr Hill's task. The talks, which began under the threat of Nato bombing in October, have fallen apart and the growing number of bloody interruptions to the truce between Belgrade and the KLA makes them ever harder to resuscitate. Mr Hill was non-committal yesterday after a meeting with Ibrahim Rugova, the most senior political spokesman for the Kosovo Albanian community but his credibility is being undermined by the inability of the international community to guarantee the safety of his people.

Gay sex at 16 vote in Commons

THE HOUSE of Commons was set to vote overwhelmingly yesterday in favour of lowering the age of consent for gay sex from 18 to 16. The debate was seven hours long and, at times, was intensely personal, tackling such subjects as sex, relationships, young love and something called "lifestyle".

This is the second time in the past year that MPs have debated the measure. The last Bill, which was passed last summer with a majority of 207, was rejected by the Lords. Yesterday's Bill was the new, improved version aimed at

BY ANN TRENEMAN

staving off further revolt. The most significant change is a new offence for a "person of trust" who has sex with a young person in their care.

Last night there was a rumour the Lords would once again strike it down when it reaches the Upper House, probably after Easter. But the Commons was not deterred. One MP remarked that this was the House's chance to "act like an adult". On the whole this was achieved, and with eloquence. Men in suits spoke of what it can be like to be a teenager.

er in the middle of an identity crisis. The Labour MP Ann Keen said: "Real love, real care, real concern means making sure young people are not criminalised for their sexuality."

The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, opened the debate by explaining the Bill was not about lifestyle or even sex. "Instead it is a question of equality before the law," he said. The current law had led to "huge human unhappiness".

Sir Norman Fowler was not so sure. He voted to lower the age of consent to 16 in 1986 but drew the line yesterday. The

public, he said, was against it. The new offence for "abuse of trust" has won over many Labour MPs, including Bassett's law Joe Ashton. He brought a sheaf of cuttings to show what the public thought about it all.

Occasionally you heard the voice of homophobia. "People do have the choice to maintain self-discipline," said a Tory, Desmond Swaine. Earlier, the Democratic Unionist Party leader, Dr Ian Paisley, had handed in a 18,000-name petition calling homosexuality an abomination that would lead to the judgement of God. But even Dr Paisley con-

ceded the almighty has no control over Europe, which has decreed the UK must make the age of consent for homosexual and heterosexual sex the same.

Sketch, page 8

IRAQ CLAIMED US aircraft killed and wounded dozens of civilians yesterday in an air raid on the southern city of Basra.

Baghdad said British and American aircraft killed several people, including women and children, when they housed on the outskirts of the city. "The criminals bombed a number of residential areas ... in Abu Fust, Basra airport and the northern Rumala oil field," the official news agency INA said.

"The indiscriminate and savage bombings have led to the martyrdom of more civilians, and civil defence units rushed to the

sites to search for bodies of martyrs and to rescue the wounded and take them to hospital."

A CNN producer in Iraq said he had seen at least 10 houses destroyed or damaged, though he did not see any civilian casualties. He said that he could see no air defence sites in the area where the damage had been done.

The Pentagon said that US carrier-based aircraft attacked an Iraqi missile site and air de-

fence installations north of Basra yesterday morning after Iraqi aircraft entered the southern no-fly zone, though it had no information on casualties.

But it confirmed that some of the laser-guided bombs had missed their target, and said it was assessing bomb damage reports. Britain denied its aircraft were involved.

The claim and counter-claim came as the US said its forces had been involved in at least five incidents yesterday in the northern and southern no-fly zones.

Heaviest attack, page 10

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Man remanded in custody
A man was remanded in custody accused of kidnapping two 10-year-olds

Olympics scandal
The IOC faces possible legal action from cities that lost out in the awarding of games

Netanyahu attacked
Israel's sacked defence minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, criticised the Prime Minister

Microsoft takes NTL stake
Microsoft injected \$500m into NTL in return for 5 per cent of the media group.

INSIDE THE REVIEW

Golden Globes
What's a bunch of Hollywood hacks got to do with movies? Answer: they give the prizes

Hamish McRae
The International Olympic Committee: a brand name in need of a business brain

Tom Lubbock
Plump flesh, limp limbs and frocks - our love affair with great sensuality

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Tabloid hard man sees his dreams die in the Mirror

ONE OF the most spectacular boardroom bust ups of recent years will climax today with the expected ousting of David Montgomery from the job of chief executive of Mirror Group.

Officially, Mr Montgomery is preparing his departure because he has lost the confidence of shareholders and non-executive directors. But behind that rather dry explanation lies a tale of intrigue, secret meetings and boardroom plotting.

It is a corporate battle which has set chief executive and chairman at one another's throats. It has also produced a classic clash of style and culture.

In one corner the dour, socially gauche Mr Montgomery, a working class loyalist from Bangor, Co Down. In the other, the wily and urbane Mirror Group chairman, Sir Victor Blank, a well-known investment banker.

To the victor, the spoils, is the convention in war. But in this case the postscript will almost certainly be the disappearance of the Mirror Group as an independent company. At least two predators are circling. With Mr Montgomery gone, Sir Victor will have removed the last impediment to the sale of Mirror Group to another newspaper publisher.

Mr Montgomery, a man not short of enemies in the media, was once described as someone who could lower the temperature of a room simply by entering it.

Within the industry he is known as something of an outsider, a cold, calculating figure with little time for social niceties, who prospered by a combination of brains, hard work and, when necessary, ingratiation.

But his business acumen has not saved him this time. Mr Montgomery's fate was sealed early yesterday when he met Mirror Group's biggest shareholder, the giant pension fund manager Phillips & Drew, run

BY MICHAEL HARRISON
AND STEVE BOGGAN

by Tony Dye. The Mirror boss was told that he had two choices: either to go voluntarily with his dignity intact or to be forced out ignominiously by a vote of the board or at a special shareholders' meeting.

Last night, Mr Montgomery was still clinging to power and claiming the support of his fellow executives and at least one non-executive. But barring a miracle of Biblical proportions, his departure will be confirmed after a board meeting today.

Mr Montgomery has no shortage of detractors in national newspaper journalism ready to share a cruel story about "Mony". David Banks, a former editor of *The Mirror*, used to call him the Cabin Boy because of the way he "sucked up" to people.

Aside from Robert Maxwell, he is arguably the most unpopular newspaperman ever to walk Fleet Street. His talents were for cutting costs, a specialty that made him a hate figure among those whose jobs he eliminated, and those whose journalism he undermined.

Yet in the eyes of the City, Mr Montgomery is reckoned to have done a reasonable job and in the early days of his stewardship he had what passes for a fair club in the Square Mile. Since rescuing Mirror Group from the ruins of the Maxwell era he has been steady progress, with one or two exceptions such as its foray into Live TV.

When he took over the share price was languishing at less than 60p. It is now above 200p and after a long period of stagnation the flagship title, *The Mirror*, is now clawing back ground in the circulation battle among the red tops.

But ultimately, cost-cutting can only take a business so far. For an encore, Mirror Group's

big City shareholders have decided they want someone who can take the business forward and earn them a better return either by selling out or merging with a rival publisher.

Mr Montgomery, apparently, is not that man. He does not feature in the future plans of either of the two bidders who have so far declared their hands - the regional newspaper group Trinity and Regional Independent Media, which is chaired by the former Conservative party chairman Sir Norman Fowler, and publishes the *Yorkshire Post* among its titles.

After a cat-and-mouse game lasting six months, Sir Victor has concluded that Mr Montgomery has never been interested in any deal that would undermine his own power base. As one adviser to the Mirror chairman put it: "The fact is Montgomery would be an im-

pediment to any deal ... because he has decided that saving his own skin is more important than serving the interests of shareholders."

As an ex-editor of both the *News of the World* and *Today*, Mr Montgomery has not been afraid of taking the Fleet Street battle to his enemies. The Montgomery camp has had three spin doctors working for it including David Burnside, a former head of PR at British Airways at the height of the dirty tricks saga.

And behold, last weekend's press was full of anti-Blank stories accusing him of making secret contact with potential bidders without the knowledge of the rest of the board and meeting Mirror shareholders without the company's advisers being present - something which breaches corporate governance principles.

Mr Montgomery will be well-rewarded on his departure. He is on a two year contract and earns more than £500,000 a year. In addition he has 400,000 share options left having already made £650,000 from cashing in other options.

Nor does his career path suggest that the media world has heard the last of David Montgomery.

Born in 1948 into a loyalist Presbyterian family, his first foray into journalism came at Queens University where he edited the student newspaper, *The Gown*, an editorship that involved writing disapproving stories of wasteful students spending their grants on booze.

After graduating he moved to Manchester on the *Daily Mirror*'s training scheme where he was remembered as a hard-working journalist who showed more of an interest in

production than writing - an early sign of his determination to be an editor.

According to Chris Horrie, author of *LIVE TV*, an account of Montgomery's downmarket foray into cable television, Derek Jameson, the head of the Manchester office, remembers repeatedly telling him to "pass off" after being pestered for extra work every night.

In 1980, Montgomery moved to London and later joined Nick Lloyd at *The Sun*. Lloyd was to become editor of the *News of the World* with Montgomery as his deputy but within three years Montgomery took over.

In 1987, Rupert Murdoch bought *Today* and installed Montgomery as editor. He was quick to identify a new market - aspirational wannabe yuppies who wore power suits, dreamed of driving Porsches but who claimed to have an interest in

the environment. Montgomery called his new constituency the "Green Greedy People".

After an unsuccessful management buyout attempt he found himself at the door of Lord Hollick of the MAI financial services group. Hollick recommended he be installed as chief executive of Mirror Group, an appointment approved by one vote.

Live TV was perhaps his lowest point, appointing the former Sun editor Kelvin MacKenzie to churn out programmes featuring topless darts, the news bunny and a Norwegian weather forecaster in a bikini.

His passing is not likely to be mourned by journalists at *The Mirror*. They, after all, were the ones who nicknamed him "Rommel" - because at least Monty was on our side.

City seeks auction, page 13

Outlook, page 15



David Montgomery, who has been told that he can go voluntarily with his dignity intact, or be forced out ignominiously

Edward Sykes



Sir Victor Blank, City deal maker and former chairman of investment bank Charterhouse. Brought in as Mirror Group chairman to find a buyer or merger partner. Concluded that was impossible with a chief executive more interested in "saving his own skin than representing shareholder interests".



Sir Norman Fowler, former Conservative cabinet minister and chairman of Regional Independent Media. Made 200p-a-share bid for Mirror Group. Questions about his contacts with the Mirror chairman Sir Victor Blank and whether he would be suitable to run a Labour-supporting paper.



Tony Dye, head of Phillips & Drew, Mirror Group's largest shareholder. Threatened to call an extraordinary meeting of shareholders to oust Mr Montgomery if he did not agree to go voluntarily. He backs an all-share offer for Mirror from the regional newspaper group Trinity.

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SAGA

Ofsted queries value of homework

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

THERE IS NO hard evidence that homework raises educational standards, according to a new study.

A report published yesterday by the Office for Standards in Education says that schools need to focus on the quality rather than the quantity of the homework that they set.

Ministers have for the first time set national guidelines on the amount of homework pupils should do, rising from 20 minutes a day for five-year-olds to two-and-a-half hours a day for 16-year-olds. And parents and

teachers are convinced of homework's value, says the study, which draws on a review of research carried out over the last decade.

But the report *Homework Learning from Practice* points out that "it is very difficult to identify a clear homework effect separate from the influence of ... factors such as home and family background which are themselves commonly associated with achievement."

Findings from the most recent international study, the Third International Maths and Science Survey, suggest that those children who do moderate amounts of homework tend to do a little better than those who spent either a lot of time or very little studying at home.

WORKING BRIEF

The new face of homework, one junior school's definition:

- weekly learning of tables;
- weekly learning of spelling;
- reading to a family member;
- family visits to museum, farm etc.
- completing "topic" assignments at weekends or in holidays;
- activities such as sport, clubs, Cubs, dancing or choir;
- musical instrument practice;
- extra-curricular activities at school

English primary school children spend less time on homework than their peers in other countries but the difference is

much less for secondary pupils, according to the survey, which was carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research. The Ofsted report, by Penelope Weston, who was formerly a researcher at the foundation, involved a telephone survey of 227 primary and 141 secondary schools as well as 29 case studies.

Mrs Weston says that schools need to decide on a clear definition of homework and communicate it to parents. "Perhaps too much has been taken for granted - for

example that all those involved share a common understanding of what homework is."

Homework, she points out, has changed over the past 30 years. It is no longer the series of clearly defined exercises from text books that most parents remember.

Instead,

it may include

research, interviews, observing, tape-recording or word-processing. One primary school suggested that "homework could be any activity which will encourage the social skills of sharing and co-operation".

THE GOOD news
trainers over the last weeks has been
Nichols's horses
enjoying a midwinter
The bad news is an
a trifle at Kempton
day is that the harr
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But there is one
exception. Nichols's v
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The reason, if any,
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going is all Nichols c
"Often you have a reason
in the preparation of
wards, but we've se
solutely nothing," he
yesterday. "They call
ground at Kempton the
it was the year before
there was no comparison

Nurses seek £750 for new year shifts

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

NURSES AND other National Health Service staff demanded a bonus of £500 yesterday for working on Millennium Eve and £250 for working the morning after. Some nurses with scarce specialisms have threatened to resign from the NHS next December and go to work for agencies who will be charging hospitals £600 for their services.

Union leaders warned the NHS Executive it could be difficult or impossible to persuade employees to turn up during the celebrations unless there is a substantial one-off payment.

Leaders of the million NHS staff calculate that their claim for a bonus would cost the service an extra £150m.

Paul Marks, deputy head of health at public service union Unison, told management that some of his members might insist on "freelancing" elsewhere unless the NHS can make it worth their while. "Everyone wants to celebrate the millennium and everyone wants the NHS to run smoothly over the holiday. It is only fair that the people who have to give up their own celebrations should receive some reward," he said.

Employees' leaders said some upmarket restaurants in

London were paying waiters £1,000 for working on New Year's Eve and health workers might decide to boost their meagre earnings. Mr Marks said staff with specific skills, such as those in catering, might want to take advantage of big bonuses elsewhere and others, such as porters, could find work as security guards.

A circular from the NHS has advised trusts to pay normal rates on 31 December and it hinted that anyone not turning in for work should be disciplined.

A spokeswoman for the NHS confirmed that management had received the claim and would reply in due course.

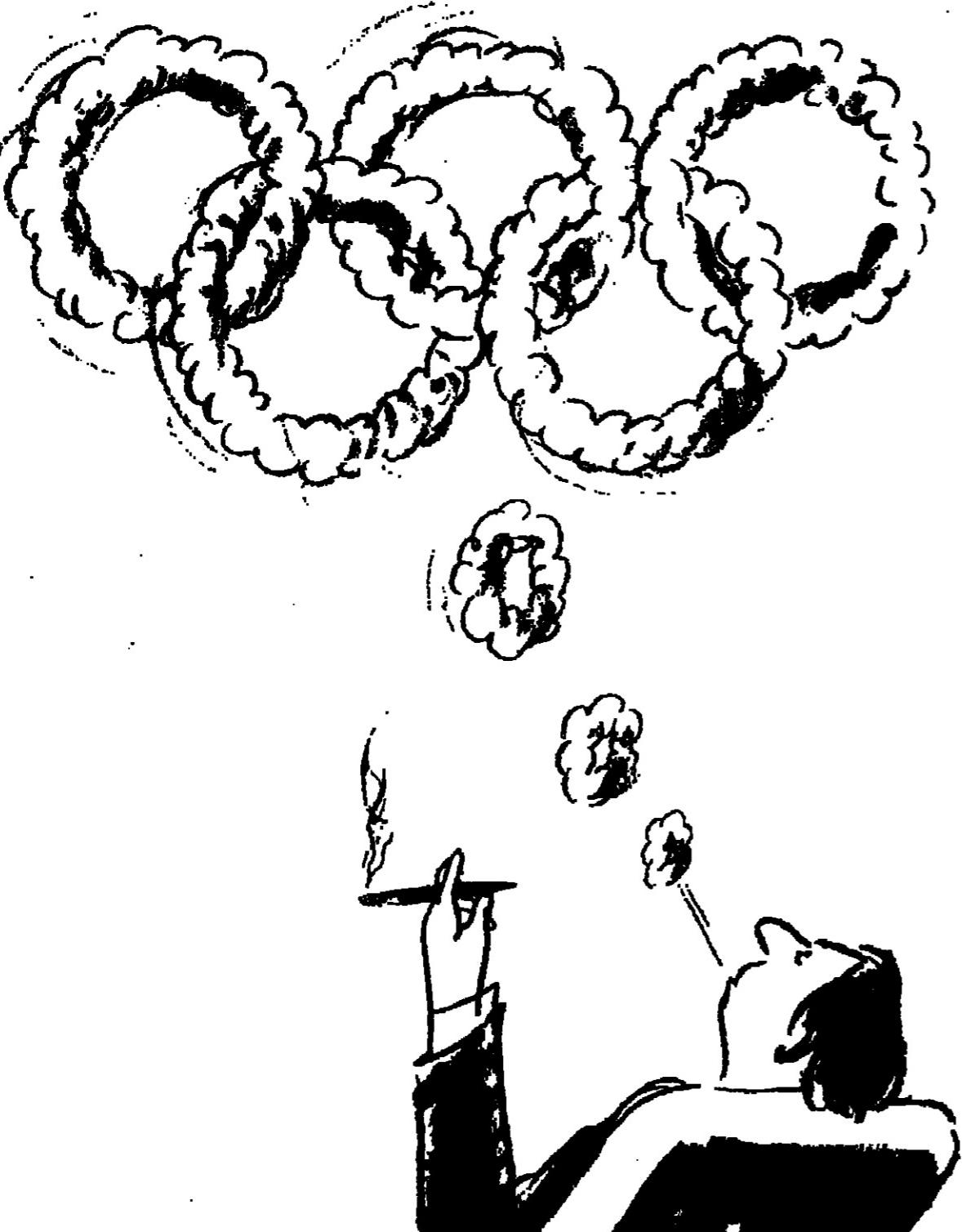
■ A university that planned to charge student nurses - who receive an annual bursary of £5,300 - for their uniforms was forced into a climbdown yesterday by Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health.

Kingston University in Surrey had planned to introduce a charge of £100 for the traditional uniform for students starting training next month. But when the details emerged yesterday, Mr Dobson reacted swiftly to have the decision reversed.

Kimberley Halls, 15, of New Hall School, Chelmsford, dressed as a 19th-century pupil as part of celebrations to mark the school's 200th anniversary at its site. John Voo



Happiness is a cigar called Hamlet.



SMOKING CAUSES CANCER
Chief Medical Officers' Warning

Labour tries to stamp out anti-Blair network

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

LABOUR PARTY leaders will launch a crackdown today against a rebel grassroots movement set up to oppose government policies and Tony Blair's "control freakery" in the running of the party.

The National Executive Committee will outlaw a group of activists in Leeds in the hope of preventing the growth of a nationwide network of anti-Blair dissidents.

The NEC will declare that the Leeds branch of the Independent Labour Network is "ineligible for affiliation to the Labour Party" - the same method used by Neil Kinnock to ban the Trotskyist Militant Tendency in the mid-Eighties. However, the NEC will be told there is growing criticism of the party's leadership among the party's grass roots.

Six constituency parties have tabled motions to today's meeting, expressing their hostility to Mr Blair's leadership. Some oppose his move to prevent Ken Livingstone becoming Mayor of London and his attempts to forge closer links

with the Liberal Democrats. The Islington South and Finsbury party of Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, has pleaded with Mr Blair to "lighten up a bit".

Its motion says it is "disappointed at the level of centralised control which the Labour leadership appears to be exercising over the party".

Mr Smith's local party adds: "While we appreciate the need to avoid damaging press stories of splits, we believe there should be more room for constructive dissent than the leadership currently seems prepared to allow."

Labour members in the city have already been expelled and two suspended, and today's meeting will approve moves to expel another local activist, Ms Young. In a confidential report to today's meeting, Labour officials say the Independent Labour Network is "operating contrary to the aims and values of the party", has its own finances and is seeking to attract membership.

The report says "it is a cause of considerable concern" that Ms Young is an integral part of the leadership of the independent network. It accuses her of supporting attacks on Fabian Hamilton, the Labour MP for Leeds North East, who was selected to fight the last general election after the Labour leadership vetoed Liz Davies, a former Islington councillor,

because of her hard left views. To Mr Blair's embarrassment, Ms Davies was elected to the NEC last September and will be present for today's discussion.

The Leeds group was set up last June, one of the first local branches of a national Independent Labour Network planned by Ken Coates and Hugh Kent, two members of the European Parliament, who were expelled from the Labour Party a year ago after they decided to join the Green Party.

The Leeds group claims a significant number of Labour members believe Mr Blair is doing to the country what he has done to the party - "essentially, this is to destroy all of the democratic structures in the organisation".

Its campaign material says: "New Labour is no more than an alternative Tory government under a Labour flag."

The group wants to "force the Labour Party back to its principles" and warns: "If this proves impossible, other courses of action may have to be considered."

MP in court over poll fraud

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

MOHAMMED SARWAR, the Labour MP for Glasgow Govan, appeared before the High Court in Edinburgh yesterday to face accusations of electoral fraud, attempting to pervert the course of justice and a false declaration of election expenses.

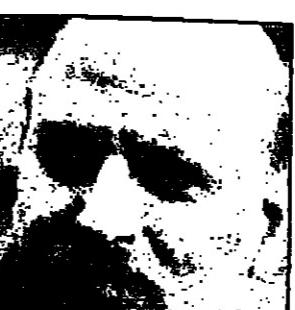
The criminal charges are the most serious levelled against a sitting MP for more than two decades. The trial is expected to last at least eight weeks and could prove an awkward distraction for the Labour Party as it tries to focus attention on its campaign for the Scottish parliamentary elections.

The provisional list of witnesses for the prosecution includes Nick Brown, the former

chief whip and now Minister of Agriculture, senior officials of the Scottish Labour Party, several journalists and a large number of people from the Pollokshields area of Glasgow, the heart of Mr Sarwar's constituency.

Mr Sarwar, 46, and his co-accused on one charge, Muztaz Hussain, appeared in court for about 20 minutes before Lady Cosgrove, Scotland's only woman High Court judge, adjourned the trial until today.

Mr Sarwar became Britain's first Muslim MP when he was elected for Govan in May 1997



Sarwar: Trial is expected to last for eight weeks

after a hard-fought contest with the Scottish National Party.

Born in Pakistan, he came to Britain in 1976 and, from self-study, became a Glasgow councillor and also served on Labour's Scottish executive.

FONTY

HYPER
2.20
3.20 Arlequin De Chancer 4.20 Stormhill

COIN: Soft
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COURT: S of village at junction

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Cities may sue IOC over bids lost to bribes

THE EMBATTLED International Olympic Committee (IOC) faces the threat of legal action for compensation by cities which have lost out in the awarding of the games.

Facing the worst corruption scandal in the IOC's history and increasing calls for his resignation, Juan Antonio Samaranch, its president, yesterday promised widespread changes in the way the venues for the games will be chosen.

But Manchester and Stockholm, whose bids to stage the Olympics failed under questionable circumstances, yesterday demanded that they should be compensated. Similar claims are expected to come from Istanbul, Berlin and Winnipeg, all of which lost bids for summer or winter games.

Manchester, which lost out to Sydney as the venue for next year's games, has asked its legal advisers to scrutinise the IOC report and is arranging talks with other cities that lost in their bids. Sydney's successful bid is now at the centre of the latest bribery allegation.

Richard Leese, Manchester city council leader, said yesterday: "If the selection competition is unfair and corrupt then the

BY KIM SENGUPTA
AND NATALIE CURRY

IOC should consider compensating Manchester and other bid cities."

Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, also proposed financial compensation for Manchester, adding: "We need to know when Sydney hosts the Olympics next year whether the city or the organisers are going to make a profit. If they are going to make a profit, that question [compensation] does seriously arise."

Officials in Stockholm also said they would be seeking a refund for the costs of around £15m for its failed 2004 bid for the games, which went to Athens.

Deputy mayor, Margaretta Olofsson, said: "I hope other cities will do the same. Maybe we can get back the costs of participating. It's so obvious that the cities did not compete on equal terms. Votes have been bought through corruption and cities that did not use these methods have not had a chance."

However, authorities in Peking, which lost by a thin margin to Sydney in its bid to host the 2000 Olympics, were last night still deciding how best to

respond. Even if Sydney is stripped of the games, Peking is not believed to be ready to step in. The Chinese government has also announced its intention to bid for the 2008 summer Games and is said to be apprehensive about alienating potential support.

Meanwhile, allegations of corruption surrounding the games continued yesterday with fresh allegations that the award of last year's winter games to Nagano, in Japan, was accompanied by IOC members being entertained in geisha parties, and receiving expensive gifts and first-class flights for their families.

It was also claimed that one IOC member was treated for surgery to remove bags under his eyes at the expense of Salt Lake City, which won the rights to the 2002 winter games.

Former minister John Gummer, who was involved in the Manchester bid, maintained the IOC encouraged a culture of corruption. "Travelling in the lap of luxury around the world, lauded wherever they went, these members of the IOC had the power to make individuals, cities and even nations rich."

HAMISH MCRAE,
Review, page 5

One BSE meal killed man

A SINGLE meal containing BSE-infected feed may have caused a teenager's death from "new variant" Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (nv-CJD), an inquest was told yesterday.

The death of 19-year-old Stephen Churchill, Britain's first known teenager to die of nv-CJD, was most likely caused by his diet, Dr James Ironside, of the National CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh, told the Wiltshire coroner.

The disease reduced Mr Churchill from a healthy, active student to a tragic and confused wheelchair patient.

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

convenience foods, though he sometimes ate burgers and liked sausages.

The coroner, David Masters, recorded a verdict of misadventure - the same verdict as a number of other coroners who have investigated deaths from nv-CJD.

Mr Churchill's mother, Dot, described how in 1994 he had a car crash in which he could not recollect how he came to be on the wrong side of the road. He became more confused, withdrawn and quiet, she said.

Previously he had enjoyed a healthy appetite, but avoided

This has put into place the last piece of the jigsaw. We feel the verdict is appropriate."



Strangers Greg Cordell and Carla Germaine marrying yesterday

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The Sinn Fein MP Martin McGuinness, who stayed away from yesterday's meeting

Stephen Davison

Mowlam demands an end to beatings

LOYALIST AND republican representatives met the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland yesterday to discuss "punishment attacks", an issue taking an increasingly prominent place on the political agenda.

Dr Mo Mowlam met people from two loyalist groupings, the Progressive Unionist Party and the Ulster Democratic Party, and from Sinn Fein, which under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement are obliged to use their influence to bring paramilitary shootings and beatings to an end.

But the Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, and the party's chief negotiator, Martin McGuinness, said they had boycotted the meeting in Belfast because the Northern Ireland Office had "hijacked it into something it was not." More junior Sinn Fein figures went in their place.

Dr Mowlam clearly challenged all the groupings on why such attacks were continuing, and on what they were doing to have them stopped. None of the parties involved appears to have accepted any responsibility for the attacks.

David Ervine, of the Progressive Unionists, indicated that Dr Mowlam had taken a

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

tough line at their meeting, describing her approach as "hard-hitting". He said, however, that the minister had not actually delivered any ultimatum to his party. He reiterated his party's opposition to such attacks, describing them as "immoral and reprehensible".

Gerry McMichael, leader of the UDP, said later: "It would be wrong for anyone to suggest that there isn't a degree of support for this. People do go to paramilitaries, particularly those who are direct victims. I argue that it is wrong but that doesn't make it go away."

"We're working on the ground to encourage people to change their attitudes, to go to the police with their problems." "Punishment" beatings and shootings by the IRA and loyalist paramilitary groups have continued in Belfast and elsewhere, the latest attacks taking place not long before yesterday's meetings.

In Rasharkin, Co Antrim an 18-year-old youth suffered head and face injuries when three masked men burst into his house and beat him with clubs, in what is presumed to have been a loyalist attack. A second

man in the house escaped injury by jumping out of a first-floor window. Earlier in what appeared to be another paramilitary-style shooting at Maghera, Co Londonderry, a man was shot in the leg.

According to the Royal Ulster Constabulary there have been 28 attacks so far this year, 14 each by loyalists and republicans. In 1996, the worst year for such attacks, loyalists and republicans were responsible for a combined total of 326 shootings and beatings.

According to figures collated by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, this dropped last year to 213. Attacks by the IRA, which in 1996 amounted to 175, last year dropped to a figure of 83. Thus the security forces are dealing not with a surge of assaults but with the continuation of an activity that has been an unwelcome but familiar feature of Belfast ghetto life since the early Seventies when, for example, the IRA would "tar and feather" girls said to have fraternised with soldiers.

The Government's quandary now is how to approach an issue that has become bound up with the overall peace process. On one reading anyone linked to groups involved in such violence should be unceremoniously ejected from the process. The Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, has signalled that if the IRA has not decommissioned weapons by March 10 he will formally seek to have Sinn Fein excluded from the new Northern Ireland administration.

The counter-argument is that it will take some time for groupings that are, hopefully, making the journey from terrorism into democracy to shake off all their previous trappings of violence. The Tory leader, William Hague, reiterated his call for early prisoner releases to stop, saying the paramilitaries were in breach of the Good Friday Agreement, and of Tony Blair's promise that the agreement meant an end to violence. "We are now seeing beatings escalate without any guns or bombs being decommissioned," Mr Haig said.

"They (the Government) are actually throwing away their negotiating cards and we are getting nearer to a point when there will be no terrorists left in prison. Mo Mowlam should be telling them today that unless they start to give up their guns and bombs and put an end to terrorist mutilations, then prisoner releases will be put on hold," he added.

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Tuesday 26 January 1999

HOME NEWS/7



This month there will be two full moons, the second being 'blue', with another due in March

الدليل على

1999 to wax and wane twice in a blue moon

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

FORGET THE ECLIPSE. This year will see one of the truly rare astronomical events: a double helping of blue moons.

Though most people use the phrase to mean "very rarely", astronomers have a simpler way of identifying a blue moon: it happens when there are two full moons in a single month.

January 1999 fits the bill – its first full moon was on 2 January, and the second will be next Sunday, just squeezing in before the end of the month.

More remarkably, we will have to wait until March for the next blue moon to arrive. "It's very unusual for this to happen," explained Simon Mitton of the Royal Astronomical Society. "It can only occur when one of the two blue moons is in January." Such a double helping will not happen again until 2018.

The reason is that the moon's own month is 29.5 days

long. Usually, that only allows for a single full moon in each calendar month. But if there is a blue moon on the last day in January, their February – being only 28 days long most years – will miss out. That in turn means that March will also have two full moons.

But the most perplexing thing about a "blue moon" is where the expression comes from. There are many competing possibilities. The "two moons in a month" explanation became accepted because the board game Trivial Pursuit began using it in 1986, according to Philip Hiscock, a folklore specialist hired by *Sky & Telescope* magazine to investigate.

Trivial Pursuit got it from a 1985 children's almanac, but the almanac's authors couldn't recall where they got it.

Among other possible ori-

gins turned up by Mr Hiscock are the 16th-century phrase "he would argue that the moon is blue" – to mean arguing that black is white. Yet another is that it is a corruption of the French "la double lune". Or a derivation from songs addressed by the lover in blue to the moon. Or even the Blue Moon cocktail, made of cacao, gin and a twist of lemon.

The trouble was that about once every three years, there would be a 13th moon – the Blue Moon – which would upset schedules for church services and celebrations.

For astronomers, though, blue moons are non-events. "It's a completely artificial phenomenon, caused by our months being split into 30, 31 and 28 days," said Dr Mitton. In fact, they occur only with the Gregorian calendar, the Islamic and Hebrew calendars, which run on alternating months of 30 and 29 days, rule out such repeats altogether.

Mothers urged to give up babies

YOUNG MOTHERS who cannot cope with their babies should be encouraged to give them up for adoption, the Home Secretary said yesterday.

Jack Straw said some young women ended up in crisis because "well-meaning but not very professional" social workers misjudged their ability to look after their children.

There are currently some 3,500 babies under the age of two in care. Mr Straw suggested social workers are being unrealistic about their chances of being successfully returned to their parents. He said adoption should be presented as a "positive, responsible choice" to mothers who could not care for their youngsters.

Speaking at a conference on families organised by the Family Policy Studies Centre, Mr Straw said it was a myth that the only children in care were older youngsters who were difficult to place.

"It is still a sad fact that many suitable couples have been on waiting lists for too long, while children have remained in care," the Home Secretary said.

He added that more babies would be put up for adoption if the system was more "user-friendly" and that the Government needed to improve the opportunities for childless couples to adopt. "The current situation is not satisfactory," he said.

But Felicity Collier, director of the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering, said Mr Straw's comments were "provocative stuff" akin to the remarks of the Tory MP John Redwood, who once said teenage single mothers should put their babies up for adoption.

She admitted some authorities were quicker than others

BY LOUISE JURY
AND IAN BURRELL

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Beware ageing Tory men baring their sexual prejudice

"YOU SIMPLY cannot have it both ways," said Gerald Howarth indignantly, intervening during the Home Secretary's speech on the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill.

Well you can, of course. Indeed, you can have it in a whole raft of ways that have probably never even been screened in Mr Howarth's mental cinema - an over-heated local feit that is largely given over to low-budget horror movies.

Showing yesterday, as MPs again discussed lowering the age of consent for male homosexuals, was that Tory cult hit *Predatory Older Men* - a lurid shocker in which a sinister army of buggers

emerges from its hiding places, released by the foolish legislative tinkering of a liberal government.

One does wonder what happened to some of these members in their tender years. What scut hut atrocities or dormitory fumblings lie behind their fixed conviction that "homosexual" and "paedophile", while not precisely synonymous, are as close as makes no difference?

It wasn't all Mr Howarth's fault, it's true, though it grieves me to confess it. The fact that the Government have yoked together two entirely distinct issues - the correction of a long-standing inequity and the extension of sexual protection for mi-

nors does tend to muddy waters that are already turbid with prejudice and sexual panic.

Even Jack Straw, who had the decency to place an unequivocal statement about equality before the law, betrays some confusion on these matters. "It is not a question of encouraging one lifestyle over another," he assured the House, perhaps anxious to forestall Tory terrors that the Government is seeking to encourage more of its citizens to have it both ways.

He was quickly called on his vocabulary by Ben Bradshaw, one of the few MPs who is open about his homosexuality. "Lifestyle" implied

THE SKETCH



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

some element of choice, he protested, whereas most evidence suggested that a person's sexuality was considerably less whimsical than

that. "I agree," snuttered the Home Secretary. "And I hope he'll note that I haven't used that term." I hope Hansard notes that he had, only seconds before.

The honourable member for Bigotry East got him off the hook by shouting something about having the choice to maintain self-discipline, an intervention seconded by the members for Buggery-on-the-Brain and Molestation Magna.

The response from the Tory frontbench was far more considered, touching even, with Sir Norman Fowler recalling his own sexual coming of age during the Aids crisis. There have been reports

that this was an eye-opening time for Sir Norman, exposing him to a crash course in the many exotic ways in which two human lego bricks can click together.

Rather winningly, he referred to the jokes about his bemuddled innocence and confessed to learning two valuable lessons. The first was that the public wants information from government, not moral guidance, and the second was that they can be mature and sensible about such matters. "We should proceed with a certain amount of humility," he said, pointing out that the party wasn't exactly in a good position to hand out moral lectures.

I confess that I was seduced - his speech was reflective and unpartisan. It recognised the limits of legislation when it comes to redressing human hurt and it refused to pander to the prejudices of members on both sides of the House. I was just about to surrender to him completely when his true intentions became clear: Sir Norman opposed the lowering of the age of consent, on the grounds that opinion polls showed the public didn't want it.

Indeed, I did wonder briefly whether I might be able to bring a prosecution under the new legislation, having been so shabbily abused by an older man in a position of trust.

MPs give mass backing to gay sex at 16

PLANS TO reduce the age of consent for homosexuals to 16 came closer to reality yesterday as MPs backed the measure overwhelmingly for the second time in seven months.

The Government is seeking to push through the package as part of the Sexual Offences Bill - which will include guidelines to protect youths aged 16 and 17 who are in care, boarding schools or the armed forces - after peers overturned the first Commons vote in July.

Ministers hope such statutory safeguards will persuade peers to back the moves by bowing to their concerns about young people who could have their trust abused. The peers voted down the age-of-consent measure last year when it was contained in the Crime and Disorder Bill, despite its big Commons majority.

The Government had offered a vote on the issue after the European Commission of Human Rights ruled that an equal age of consent was a violation of privacy laws and anti-discrimination clauses of the European Convention on Human Rights. The three main party leaders and almost the Cabinet voted for the change.

Opening the new Bill's second reading debate, which will be decided in a free vote, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, argued for the age reduction because he believed in "equality before the law".

Offerings to protect vulnerable teenagers, he said a new offence of abuse of trust would be introduced and codes of conduct strengthened to prevent abuse in other areas

HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS

By SARAH SCHAEFER

Political Reporter

enter into an ostensibly consensual sexual relationship with someone over whom they are in a position of authority".

The shadow home secretary, Sir Norman Fowler, told MPs that recent polls proved the public was as a whole opposed to a lowering of the age of consent when it came "nearer and nearer to what they regard as childhood".

However strongly MPs felt on the issue, they "would do well to take note" of public opinion, he said, adding: "I do not believe that there is any evidence to suggest that public opinion is unreasonable on this issue of the age of consent."

"I don't believe their vote indicates an inherent prejudice against another or of encouraging young people to have sex. Far from it; instead, it is a question of equality before the law. It is not, in my personal view, right for the law to discriminate against the homosexual," he said.

But Desmond Swayne, Tory MP for New Forest West, said the law should restrain activity that the majority viewed as "undesirable or unnatural", adding: "People do have the choice to maintain self-discipline."

Replies from Labour MPs made clear there was no evidence that when homosexual acts were illegal at any age, this cut the number of people engaging in them. It led to "huge human unhappiness and very great injustice".

An abuse of trust could occur "where someone in a position of authority uses their influence or power, either deliberately or unintentionally, to

affect children".

He said Mr Straw had done a "magnificent job in listening to the backbenchers in the House and the mood of the House, which was perhaps misunderstood last June".

A massive failure by a new government computer system has left more than 160,000 pensioners out of pocket by up to £1,000 a week, a Whitehall spending watchdog has found.

The National Audit Office confirmed that hundreds of thousands of pensioners, widows and jobseeker's allowance claimants have been underpaid because of defects in the national insurance records system.

A scathing report presented to the Commons Public Accounts Committee yesterday said private pension providers had been paid nearly £40m compensation to cover the blunders.

SOCIAL SECURITY

By PAUL WAUGH

Political Correspondent

The report concluded there were "serious doubts" that the £170m computer would be running to the Government's new target date of 1 March.

More than 1.2 million claims for jobseeker's allowance had been cleared without the benefit of up-to-date information, and 160,000 claims for state earnings-related pensions had been underpaid by up to £100 a week. About 35,000 claims for widow's benefit are being made on an emergency basis and more than 350,000 claims for incapacity benefit have also gone ahead without full information.

David Davis, chairman of the committee, said there had been "a clear failure" to deliver a crucial service to some of the most vulnerable in society.

Alistair Darling, the Secretary of State for Social Security, wrote to all MPs last September claiming the system would be operational "within a couple of weeks".

Iain Duncan Smith, the Tory social security spokesman, said Mr Darling's stance highlighted a lack of concern and urgency about the problem. "The complacency of the Government comes close to deceit," he said.

George Bertram, chief executive of the Contributions Agency, faced sharp criticism

from MPs when he appeared before the Public Accounts Committee yesterday. Alan Williams, Labour MP for Swansea West, told him the "shambles" suggested Andersen Consulting had used the benefits system as part of its learning curve.

Stephen Timms, the Pensions minister, said yesterday on BBC Radio that compensation, including interest, would be paid as soon as the system was operating properly.

The Post Office will stop redirecting housing benefit cheques from next month in a new attempt to stamp out fraud, Mr Darling said yesterday.

Virgin delays upset minister's triumph

PETER KILFOYLE, the Public Services minister, was due yesterday to launch a new taskforce to improve quality in public services.

He was also to announce that the biggest number yet of government services had won the Charter Mark award - which aims to make organisations more efficient and effective. But instead of trumpeting the achievements of public services he arrived late, embarrassed and furious.

PUBLIC SERVICES

By SARAH SCHAEFER

Mr Kilfoyle took the Virgin Railways west coast train from Liverpool to London Euston. He made clear Richard Branson's train service did not have a Charter Mark: "No, they did not apply. They knew they would stand no chance of winning it," he said.

The 508 Charter Mark winners will be announced today.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Balkan danger

VIOLENCE IN Kosovo could spark a "catastrophe", the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson said, adding that the problem had no "easy or glib" solutions.

Net defence

A PACKAGE OF measures will be introduced to defend Britain's computer systems, the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, disclosed.

Denning praise

THE FORMER MASTER of the Rolls, Lord Denning, was described as "one of the greatest living Englishmen" by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, as peers paid tribute to him after his 100th birthday on Saturday.

THE HOUSE

Church debate

SIMON HUGHES, a possible Liberal Democrat leadership contender, backed calls for the disestablishment of the Church of England. But Labour's Stuart Bell said: "It is interesting to know that the Liberals feel that disestablishment is in the [public] interest."

Spying demand

TAM DALYELL, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, urged ministers to respond to an exclusive investigation published in yesterday's *Independent* that MI6 officers worked under cover as part of the Unicom team looking for biological and chemical weapons in Iraq.

Product Recall Notice

Teletubbies Soft Torch (foam covered, £5.99)

Product Code: TT502



Woolworths has learned of a potential safety issue with its Teletubbies Soft Torch (product code: TT502). The soft character material is a potential choking hazard to young children.

In the interests of customer safety and as a precautionary measure, the Teletubbies Soft Torch has been withdrawn from sale in all Woolworths stores.

Any customer who has purchased this product from Woolworths since October 1998 should return it to their nearest store where a full refund will be given. A receipt is not necessary. No other Teletubbies products are affected.

WOOLWORTHS

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"...savage stuff."
Barry Norman - THE RADIOTIMES

"...truly a terrific film."
REVIEW

"Sinks its teeth... like a Boberman with a raw steak."
WHAT'S ON IN LONDON

"...intelligent, funny, moving and above all brave."
Phil Capaldi - BFI CINEMA

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Produced by Warren Beatty

Screenplay by Warren Beatty

Music by Warren Beatty

Edited by Warren Beatty

Costume Design by Warren Beatty

Production Design by Warren Beatty

Cinematography by Warren Beatty

Sound by Warren Beatty

Visual Effects by Warren Beatty

Visual Effects Supervisor by Warren Beatty

Visual Effects Editors by Warren Beatty

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| DC | Cardiff City | £96 | | |
| DA | Dublin Airport (TRE) | £114 | | |
| ED | Edinburgh* | £82 | | |
| GL | Glasgow (Erskine Bridge) | £78 | | |
| GA | Glasgow Airport* | £78 | | |
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10/FOREIGN NEWS

Heaviest raids since Desert Fox

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington and
RICHARD DOWNES
in Amman

THE CONFLICT between Washington and Baghdad escalated to a new level of danger yesterday, with at least five separate attacks by US aircraft on Iraqi targets.

Baghdad said a number of civilians were killed in what it called "savage" air raids on civilian and economic targets in the south of the country.

The official Iraqi News Agency, INA, reported "tens of people" injured in the attacks and the information minister, Humam Abdul-Khalaq Abdul-Gafur, said those killed included women and children, following "at least two attacks on civilian sites".

Missiles hit the densely populated area of al-Jumhuriya close to the southern city of Basra, INA reported.

Mr Abdul-Gafur said the attacks were carried out by "the American and British fighters". A British government official said last night that no British aircraft were involved.

America and Britain say their aircraft are being targeted by Iraqi radar and surface-to-air missiles, and that Iraqi aircraft are intruding into the no-fly zones established after the Gulf War. Iraq says the zones are illegitimate.

Iraq says the US and Britain are once again conducting an aerial bombing campaign against the country, not just sporadic responses to Iraqi challenges, as London and Washington claim.

The level of conflict yesterday was the most violent since the air campaign, Operation Desert Fox, ended last month. It has become increasingly less clear whether allied fighters are

defending themselves or are deliberately targeting Iraqi facilities at will. "There were air strikes in the southern no-fly zone as a result of provocation," said a US spokesman yesterday. He said the latest incidents targeted air defence facilities and surface-to-air missiles.

The US said the attack on Basra was a reprisal for an incursion by Iraqi aircraft into the southern no-fly zone, not for an



A 'Hornet' speeds past the USS Carl Vinson in the Gulf. US warplanes fired missiles in southern Iraq which, Iraq said, killed several people

Aircraft had been illuminated by Iraqi ground radar near Mosul, and the US had responded by bombing an anti-aircraft site and two missile sites.

America and Britain already have over 200 aircraft patrolling the skies over southern Iraq. In addition they have sent extra aircraft to defend Kuwait, and new A-10 tankbusters will arrive shortly to rotate with aircraft that are to return to the US.

Britain has also dispatched the aircraft carrier HMS Invincible, carrying an extra 24 Harrier fighter-bombers.

Iraq may be trying to drive a wedge between the US and Britain and other powers through the conflict. Yesterday the speaker of the Russian Duma, Gennady Seleznyov, said he was furious at the attack. He told the visiting US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, of his foreign minister stormed out.

anger. "I said, again peaceful people have been killed but she said nothing," he said.

The upsurge in attacks came less than 24 hours after an Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo failed to provide any comfort for Saddam Hussein's regime. The meeting told Iraq to comply with UN Security Council resolutions and to stop threatening its neighbours. Iraq's foreign minister stormed out.

Monica phobia may bring trial to end

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

AT THE start of the most crucial week in the Senate trial of the President – perhaps the final week – the air on Capitol Hill was thick with the swirl of plans and initiatives designed to bring Bill Clinton's impeachment to an end. With the 67 votes needed to convict and remove Mr Clinton clearly not there, pressure was mounting from both sides, and public opinion, to halt an exercise increasingly deemed to be futile.

Many Senators feared the trial could descend into an ill-tempered slanging match no

different from the impeachment debate in the House of Representatives. But they also had party political concerns. With the row about witnesses back on the agenda and crystallised around Monica Lewinsky, the need for a compromise was urgent.

Democrats, like the White House, fear the unpredictability that witnesses might bring, while Republicans fear loss of face from a premature com-

promise or the public opprobrium that could come from prolonging the trial. The big question was how to end it all, on constitutionally and politically acceptable terms.

The figure of Ms Lewinsky, who remained in Washington yesterday, seemed to loom over discussions as a warning of the perils ahead if the witnesses dispute was not resolved.

Her precipitate return to Washington under a court order obtained by the House prosecutors had upset careful moves towards compromise, and brought no clarity either. The prosecutors had wanted to explore whether she had more evidence that would support or clarify their case that Mr Clinton committed perjury and obstructed justice in his efforts to keep their relationship secret.

After a two-hour meeting with her and her lawyers, they affirmed that she did. Describing Ms Lewinsky as "impressive and poised", they said that she might be a "very helpful witness, if called". Ms Lewinsky's lead lawyer, Plato Cacheris, begged to differ, saying that his

client had "added nothing to the record sitting before the Senate".

The New York Times yesterday reported Ms Lewinsky as having told a friend: "I gave them nothing", a clear message to the White House that she had nothing to fear.

Weekend polls indicated that almost 60 per cent of Americans – and half of all Republicans asked – wanted the trial over, and several senior Senators had offered olive branches along the lines of conviction without removal (Republicans) and a return to the idea of censure.

The most promising plan was proposed yesterday by the leader of the Senate's Democratic minority, Tom Daschle, who called it a "mutual withdrawal of forces". This would entail the abandonment by the Democrats of the motion to dismiss the case, and the agreement of Republicans not to require witnesses. With the House prosecutors given what Mr Daschle called "a fair opportunity to make their arguments", the Senate would then debate the charges and vote. The plan was rejected.

Copernicus book that escaped the flames is found

BY ELIZABETH NASH
in Madrid

A HISTORIAN in the small town of Orense in north-west Spain says he has discovered in a school library a priceless 16th-century work by the astronomer Copernicus that somehow escaped the flames of the Inquisition.

De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium, (On The Heavenly Revolutions Of The Earth), printed in Basle in Switzerland in 1543, explains with diagrams and mathematical formulae how the earth revolves around the sun.

However, heliocentric theories of the universe were condemned as heresy by the Holy Inquisition, and Copernicus's work figured prominently on the Catholic Church's list of banned books that were to be destroyed. The public burning of supposedly heretical works – and people – throughout Europe and especially Spain was at its most intense around the time that the book appeared.

The Galician historian, Justo Carnicero Mendez-Aguirre, says he found the 213-page volume, bound in tooled leather and embossed with images of scholars of the time, in the library of the Posio Institute, a secondary school in Orense. "It must be one of the few remaining copies in Europe to survive the Inquisition, and it is certainly the only one in Spain," says Mr Car-

nicero. He believes the book lay for centuries in the vaults of a monastery. "It shows that the monasteries kept in touch with the scientific developments of the time, despite the prevailing censorship," he told the *Voz de Galicia* newspaper.

The work is in Latin, with corrections by the astronomer Kepler, and contains many engravings of celestial bodies and mathematical calculations. There are also notes in the margin, which were written in Latin by someone in the 16th century.

The Posio Institute houses the provincial library of Orense, created from libraries held by monasteries of the region after they were dissolved in 1836.

TEAMS & CONDITIONS
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BRIEFING

Ericsson to cut 11,000 jobs

ERICSSON, the troubled Swedish telecoms giant, yesterday said it would axe 11,000 jobs worldwide in a bid to slash costs and restore investors' confidence. The company, which issued a profit warning last month, said that its 104,000 workforce would be reduced by more than 5,000 this year and 6,000 in 2000. Ericsson, Sweden's largest company, said the job cuts would yield cost savings of 3bn Swedish crowns (£234m) in two years' time. It added that the restructuring was part of its plans to move away from fixed telephone networks to focus on the booming mobile phones and Internet markets.

Green takes over at Sears

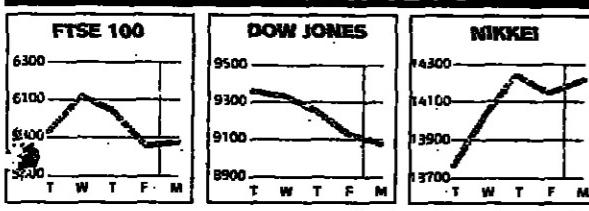
PHILIP GREEN (left) formally won control of the ailing Sears group yesterday when his January investments vehicle said it had agreed to buy 52.9 per cent of the shares. JIL, bankrolled by the Barclay Brothers, agreed to buy the 34 million shares controlled by Phillips & Drew, Sears' largest shareholder.

Mr Green, who was still in the south of France yesterday, said he will move into Sears head office in London today to start work. He added: "I'll be there from noon. I'll meet all the management and get everyone settled." He declined to say if there would be any early decisions on how many of the old Sears board he would retain or how quickly he might sell parts of the business. "People think I'm going to sell bits and pieces within five minutes but that's not true."

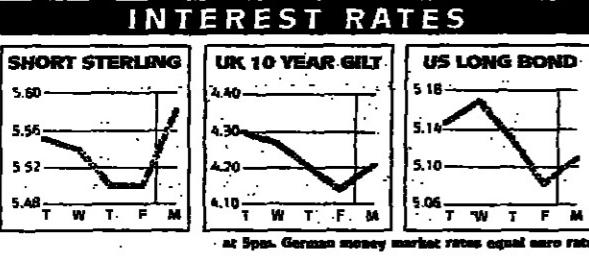
Pearson publishers for sale

PEARSON, the media company, yesterday hung a for-sale sign over a group of reference and business publishing businesses with annual sales of \$250m (£150m). The businesses, including titles such as Webster's New World Dictionary and Betty Crocker's Cookbook, were bought last year as part of Pearson's \$4.6bn purchase of the bulk of Simon & Schuster.

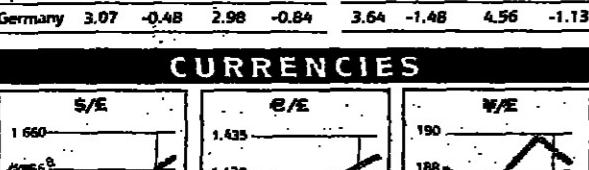
STOCK MARKETS



| INDICES | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----------|---------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------|--|--|--|
| Index | Close | Change | Change (%) | 52 wk. high | 52 wk. low | Yield (%) | | | |
| FTSE 100 | 5880.90 | -19.70 | -0.34 | 6195.60 | 4599.20 | 2.75 | | | |
| FTSE 250 | 4835.20 | 6.10 | 0.13 | 5970.90 | 4247.60 | 3.41 | | | |
| FTSE 350 | 2770.00 | 8.40 | 0.30 | 2969.10 | 2210.40 | 2.85 | | | |
| FTSE All Share | 2672.99 | 7.63 | 0.29 | 2886.52 | 2143.53 | 2.89 | | | |
| FTSE SmallCap | 2091.40 | -1.70 | -0.08 | 2793.40 | 1834.40 | 3.85 | | | |
| FTSE MidCap | 1177.90 | 0.60 | 0.05 | 1517.10 | 1046.20 | 4.61 | | | |
| FTSE AIM | 818.80 | 0.50 | 0.06 | 1146.90 | 761.30 | 1.22 | | | |
| FTSE Eurotop 100 | 2725.83 | 14.66 | 0.54 | 3079.27 | 2018.15 | 2.16 | | | |
| FTSE Eurotop 300 | 1186.50 | 6.15 | 0.52 | 1332.07 | 880.63 | ... | | | |
| Dow Jones | 9080.03 | -32.44 | -0.36 | 9547.98 | 7400.30 | 1.69 | | | |
| Nikkei | 14208.81 | -54.41 | -0.38 | 17352.95 | 12787.90 | 1.02 | | | |
| Hang Seng | 9499.50 | -239.02 | -2.45 | 11926.16 | 6544.79 | 3.70 | | | |
| Dax | 4982.45 | -36.83 | -0.73 | 6217.83 | 3633.71 | 1.74 | | | |
| S&P 500 | 1223.27 | -2.12 | -0.17 | 1278.05 | 923.32 | 1.29 | | | |
| Nasdaq | 2543.31 | 3.95 | 0.17 | 2474.20 | 1357.09 | 2.29 | | | |
| Toronto 300 | 6593.20 | 1.59 | 0.02 | 7837.70 | 5320.90 | 1.64 | | | |
| Brazil Bovespa | 7190.21 | -131.11 | -1.79 | 12339.14 | 4575.69 | 8.75 | | | |
| Belgium Bel20 | 3364.86 | -18.91 | -0.56 | 3713.21 | 2502.77 | 2.11 | | | |
| Amsterdam Exch | 525.36 | 6.53 | 1.28 | 600.65 | 366.58 | 1.87 | | | |
| France CAC 40 | 4050.80 | 31.47 | 0.78 | 4404.94 | 2881.40 | 1.99 | | | |
| Milan MIB30 | 33648.00 | -97.00 | -0.29 | 35170.00 | 24175.00 | 1.21 | | | |
| Mid Index 35 | 9665.60 | 53.60 | 0.58 | 10989.80 | 6689.90 | 1.93 | | | |
| Mid Overall | 5254.46 | 20.87 | 0.40 | 5581.70 | 3732.57 | 1.43 | | | |
| S Korea Corp | 539.76 | -10.82 | -1.97 | 651.85 | 277.37 | 1.10 | | | |
| Australia ASX | 2827.90 | -20.50 | -0.72 | 2902.90 | 2386.70 | 3.25 | | | |



| MONEY MARKET RATES | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------|---------|---------|----------|-----------|--------|
| Index | 2 months | 3 months | 6 months | 1 year | 2 years | 5 years | 10 years | Long term | Yr Avg |
| UK | 5.79 | -1.77 | 5.44 | -2.13 | 4.21 | -1.85 | 4.22 | -1.79 | |
| US | 4.97 | -0.66 | 5.03 | -0.68 | 4.66 | 0.97 | 5.11 | 0.79 | |
| Japan | 0.46 | -0.28 | 0.46 | -0.25 | 1.87 | -0.20 | 2.85 | 0.15 | |
| Germany | 3.07 | -0.48 | 2.98 | -0.84 | 3.64 | -1.48 | 4.56 | -1.13 | |



| CURRENCIES | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| \$/£ | 1.650 | 1.645 | 1.650 | 1.645 | 1.640 | 1.645 | 1.650 | 1.645 | 1.650 |
| £/€ | 1.435 | 1.430 | 1.435 | 1.430 | 1.425 | 1.430 | 1.435 | 1.430 | 1.435 |
| \$/¥ | 130 | 125 | 130 | 125 | 120 | 125 | 130 | 125 | 130 |
| POUND | 1.6567 | +0.12c | 1.6568 | -0.21c | 4.21 | -1.85 | 4.22 | -1.79 | |
| Dollar | 1.4322 | +0.31c | 1.4323 | -0.4079 | 1.1572 | -0.12c | 1.1665 | | |
| Euro | 1.4222 | +0.28c | 1.4223 | -0.3079 | 1.1472 | -0.13c | 1.1565 | | |
| Yen | 168.45 | -1.13c | 169.63 | -1.14c | 113.76 | -0.91c | 126.58 | | |
| £ index | 100.20 | +0.40 | 104.90 | -0.10 | 104.30 | -0.10 | 108.00 | | |

| OTHER INDICATORS | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------|--------|--------|--------|----------|------------------|
| Close | Chg | Yr Ago | Index | Chg | Yr Ago | Wk Ago | Mo Ago | Year Ago | |
| Brent Oil (\$) | 11.12 | -0.27 | 14.12 | GDP | 115.40 | 3.00 | 112.04 | Mar | |
| Gold (\$) | 288.35 | 1.85 | 297.50 | RP | 164.40 | 2.80 | 159.92 | Jan | |
| Silver (\$) | 5.10 | -0.04 | 5.82 | Base Rates | 6.00 | 7.25 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | On 5pm |
| | | | | | | | | | SOURCE BLOOMBERG |

| TOURIST RATES | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------|--|------------------------|---------|--|------|--|--|--|
| Australia (\$) | 2.5377 | | Mexican (Nuevo peso) | 15.43 | | | | | |
| Austria (schillings) | 19.07 | | Netherlands (guilders) | 3.0560 | | | | | |
| Belgium (francs) | 56.07 | | New Zealand (\$) | 2.9682 | | | | | |
| Canada (\$) | 2.4585 | | Norway (krone) | 12.03 | | | | | |
| Cyprus (pounds) | 0.8046 | | Portugal (escudos) | 276.94 | | | | | |
| Denmark (kroner) | 10.39 | | Saudi Arabia (rials) | 6.0427 | | | | | |
| Finland (markka) | 8.2862 | | Singapore (\$) | 2.6695 | | | | | |
| France (francs) | 9.1065 | | South Africa (rand) | 9.6882 | | | | | |
| Germany (marks) | 2.7270 | | Spain (pesetas) | 230.77 | | | | | |
| Greece (drachma) | 4.4900 | | Sweden (kronor) | 12.50 | | | | | |
| Hong Kong (\$) | 12.46 | | Switzerland (francs) | 2.2250 | | | | | |
| Ireland (pounds) | 1.0922 | | Thailand (bahts) | 55.48 | | | | | |
| Indian (rupees) | 63.37 | | Turkey (lira) | 52.3172 | | | | | |
| Israel (shekels) | 6.2441 | | USA (\$) | 1.6199 | | | | | |
| Italy (lira) | 2599 | | | | | </td | | | |

14/BUSINESS

16/

News Analysis: Launch of Cruickshank's review sends shares into sharp reverse

Banking profits to be at heart of inquiry

DON CRUICKSHANK, the former telecommunications regulator, yesterday sought to play down fears of an onslaught against banking profits as he formally kicked off the government's inquiry into the banking sector.

Mr Cruickshank, who was chosen by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, last November to head the review, said yesterday that the aim of the inquiry was not to "bash the banks" but to see whether more competition was needed to improve levels of efficiency and innovation both within the sector and in the economy generally.

"The review will not consider a windfall tax," he said. "It is an opportunity for them [the banks] to make their case as well as for others to complain."

Despite the reassuring words, the launch prompted City dealers to mark banking shares down 1.5 per cent. British banks are currently by far the most profitable in Europe and the degree to which those profits are accumulated at customers' expense lies at the heart of the inquiry.

The Government, Mr Cruickshank said, had posed the question. "How we can raise the long-term systemic growth rate to the rates of our competitor economies? The question for the review is how the banking sector is doing its part in shifting that growth rate."

The review, whose conclusions will be published before the end of the year, will focus on three main areas:

- money transmission, the core of the banking system;
- the credit card merchant acquiring services (the area of the credit card business that serves retailers);
- lending, with a particular emphasis on small and medium-sized businesses.

Mr Cruickshank has specifically excluded the large corporate lending market, and insurance, both areas in which he believes there is enough competition.

He also plans to address



DON CRUICKSHANK

Don Cruickshank kicking off the inquiry into the banking sector at the Treasury yesterday Peter Macdiarmid

broaden issues, including whether anything can be done about so-called "credit crunches" – the tendency of banks to draw in their horns in times of economic downturn – and the impact of the euro. He will consider whether Britain's being outside monetary union will deny consumers the benefits of greater competition, and whether it will damage the competitiveness of UK banking system overall.

Lastly he will look at the impact of tax breaks. Generally, he said, he believed there should be little room for government, pointing out that the Government was in the midst of a massive overhaul in financial services regulation generally.

Mr Cruickshank yesterday distanced himself from those in the small business and consumer lobby who have long

broadened efficiency terms you get a very different picture."

British banks fare best on return on equity and on cost-income ratios (the proportion of earnings that are consumed by overheads), both measures favoured by investment bankers. But that could just as well mean that British banks are less efficient but can charge higher margins than rivals abroad.

The track record of British banks on innovation, particularly technological innovation, is patchy at best. "The core banking system is 20 years old," says John Harrison, head of the banking practice at Deloitte & Touche's consultancy arm. Britain badly lags many parts of Europe, and even the Middle East and Asia, in terms of electronic banking, for both retail and corporate business.

Other countries are already well ahead in cashless and paperless banking systems, and in the use of smart cards and electronic point-of-sale technology. In areas where British banks were pioneers, such as telephone banking, other countries are fast catching up.

France and Belgium are already ahead of the UK in terms of percentage of retail customers using telephone banking. By next year, the proportions will be broadly similar across the board. Whether these failings are due to a lack of competition is a moot point.

John Harrison, who heads the banking practice at the consultancy arm of Deloitte & Touche, says that every study he has ever read concludes: there is no shortage of capital in Britain, the problem is the lack of decent propositions in which to invest. "It is more of a cultural thing," he says, "the Americans have a more can-do mentality."

But the City has reason to fear. The banks continually point to their relative success, but studies show that British banks could have much to learn in terms of delivering to their customers from rivals in Europe as well as the US.

Angus Hilsop, banking partner at the consultants Price WaterhouseCoopers, says the sniggers that mention of Deutsche Bank or Credit Lyonnais provokes in banking circles here may be misplaced.

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complained about the behaviour of the banks. For those who were looking for a "more frontal attack" on traditional gripes such as overcharging and not understanding small business, he admitted "this may seem like a dull document".

Blaming British bankers for the failure of British entrepreneurship is an age-old British parlour game. James Dyson, investor of the bagless vacuum cleaner, is just the latest successful British inventor to claim he believes there is enough competition.

He also plans to address

the banks when he needed them most.

In the 1960s, against a similar background of complaints about banks' continual failure to do enough to promote growth, the Labour government of the time, under Harold Wilson, launched a Royal Commission into the City. After much expensive deliberation among the great and the good, it concluded that there was little fundamentally wrong.

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THE INDEPENDENT
Tuesday 26 January 1999

BUSINESS/15

Now Mirror needs to fill Blank space

THERE WILL be rejoicing among many of his former editors, but are Mirror Group's largest three or four shareholders led from the front by a City practitioner of the old guard, Sir Victor Blank, doing the right thing in driving David Montgomery out of the chief executive's seat?

That he will be going is not in doubt, even as, fighter to the end, he prepares to man the last of the barricades. The only question seems to concern the degree of dignity with which he is allowed to depart. About the best Mr Montgomery can now hope for is a stay of execution, to remain in place for the six-month mandatory Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation that the group must go through if it is to merge with either of the two mooted bidders. But as seasoned City observers were saying last night, the retractions are now so deep and bitter that compromise looks next to impossible.

How did it come to this? On one level this is about the Belfast boy made good, the former tabloid newspaper editor determined to rise to the top and finally getting his hands on a quite substantial publicly quoted company. From his Canary Wharf eyrie, he runs it as a fiefdom and he naturally doesn't want to let go.



OUTLOOK

With his Ulster roots to the fore, he refuses to compromise the management structure he has put in place. The sense of siege is heightened by a persistently hostile press. To keep fractious investors off his back, he brings in a City toff with more than 30 years of deal-making behind him to act as chairman.

Very quickly it becomes clear they don't get along. They are like chalk and cheese, the clubbable, smooth-talking Sir Victor, and the aloof, workaholic figure of Mr Montgomery. Finally matters are brought to a head by the termination of merger talks with Trinity, the regional newspaper group. Mr Montgomery admits that in part the breakdown was about who manages the com-

bined group, but insists that primarily it was just that the offer wasn't good enough.

Sir Victor, for whom there was to be a continued role as chairman, no less – goes ballistic, and backed by Phillips & Drew, Mirror's largest shareholder, accuses Mr Montgomery of putting his job before the interests of shareholder value.

Confusingly, Mr Montgomery then manages to vindicate his stance by attracting a rival and higher offer, from Regional Independent Media. But still Sir Victor wants him out. Trinity won't come back to the negotiating table unless Mr Montgomery goes. Sir Victor says through his emissaries. Throughout all this, needless to say, there has been only the most cursory of Stock Exchange announcements. Mirror's advisers and the Takeover Panel are tearing their hair out as the story gets spun and respun unattributably through the press.

It is more than possible to fault Mr Montgomery's management style, though the City can hardly complain about his consistent record of earnings and dividend growth. And undoubtedly he has made many enemies over the years. But unless Sir Victor knows something the rest of us don't, it is hard to see what Mr

Montgomery has done wrong in this instance.

Sir Victor obviously thinks that Monty would get in the way of just about any deal, however good, that the RIM offer is just a ruse, and that Mr Montgomery is determined to defend his position and empire to the last, regardless of the cost to shareholders.

Well maybe, maybe not, but just how far are managements supposed to go in facilitating a bid? It is surely not realistic to expect executives to set light to themselves in order to allow someone else to step into their shoes. Furthermore, it is customary to pay a premium for management control. This, Trinity has so far shown very little inclination of doing. As for Sir Victor, his position is plainly ridged with at least as much conflict of interest as that of Mr Montgomery, and it might perhaps be appropriate if he too were made to throw himself on the pyre – all in the interests of shareholder value, you understand.

LucasVarity

IT SEEMS to have become quite the thing for companies to make highly conditional takeover bids. Thus we

have Trinity's supposed promise to come back and talk turkey with Mirror Group if Monty is made to go. Not that Trinity has said this publicly. So far we only have the Sunday press's word for it. And yesterday we had a similar ploy from Federal Mogul concerning the other Victor – Victor Rice of LucasVarity.

Dick Snell, chairman of Federal Mogul, says he's prepared to bid 220p a share, but only if LucasVarity agrees and allows him in to do a full diligence. It goes without saying that this bid is framed as a takeover, which would presumably involve Victor Rice and the rest of his board making a rapid exit. Mr Rice may have had to struggle with his aim of returning to the US, but even he had little difficulty in rejecting this entirely frivolous proposal.

Nor did his chairman, Ed Willis, turn round and accuse him of standing in the way of shareholder value by so doing.

Obviously it is in no one's interests to waste huge amounts of money fighting ultimately pointless City takeover battles, and it is certainly true that quite often managements are reluctant to agree proposals which might benefit their shareholders. But the system is biased enough against vulnerable

executive teams, without allowing bidders to make these virtual offers. The Takeover Panel should force Federal Mogul to put up and let the arguments be put, or shut up.

Monsoon

MONSOON looked over-priced when it limped on to the stock market last year, and so it has proved. Shares in the women's fashion retailer have now lost three-quarters of their value since the float last February.

This company's many critics were plainly right to advise investors not to touch Monsoon with a barge-pole. The racy multiple attached to the shares suited no one, apart from Peter Simon, the group's Armani-clad founder, who netted a very handy £85m from the float.

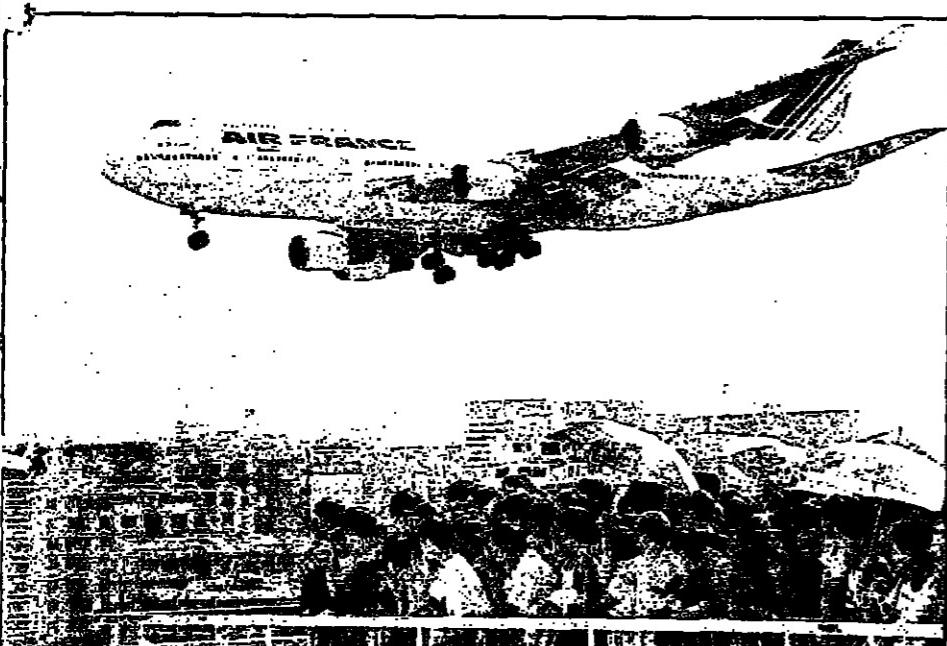
This was a company which had pulled a float plan before because of concerns about its ownership structure. Margins were already so high as to leave no room for improvement and the store opening programme looked overambitious.

The institutional investors who bought the sales pitch of Monsoon's advisers BT Alex. Brown, or NatWest Securities, as it then was,

must be feeling very sore indeed. In the last year Monsoon has done nothing but disappoint. Its shares only ever rose above the issue price by a few pennies, giving shareholders no chance to book a profit. Monsoon's 12 year record of unbroken profits growth has gone already and the performance of the business is getting worse, not better.

Monsoon has compounded a generally ugly high street scene with its own mistakes. The result is that Monsoon's much vaunted margins have taken a pasting. The store opening programme continues, even though it is obvious that management has been distracted by over-expansion. The nuts and bolts of retailing, such as product quality and store presentation, seem to have been neglected.

Mr Simon thinks the market has been too hard on him, and bought back more stock last September, taking the total holding by directors to the maximum 75 per cent allowed. It would plainly make sense for him to buy the rest at these prices, but he'd be chased out of town if he even dared to attempt it. What is clear is that he should never have taken this company public.



Brokers to the French government yesterday completed a warm-up round of presentations to investors ahead of the £440m sale of 20 per cent of its shareholding in Air France, which is expected to start in earnest on Wednesday.

Carphone Warehouse buys Tandy stores

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

ONE OF Britain's best-known electrical retail chains changed hands yesterday when the Tandy stores were sold to the Carphone Warehouse group for an undisclosed sum.

Carphone Warehouse, which is chaired by the former Guinness chairman Ernest Saunders, is buying the stores from InterTan, which owns the Radio Shack electrical stores in the United States.

The deal includes all 270 branches of Tandy in the UK and will give the enlarged group a total chain of 450 stores with annual sales of 350.

Charles Dunstone, founder of Carphone Warehouse, said the Tandy name will be retained and that there are no

plans for stores closure or job losses.

It will shift the product mix, however, to focus more on mobile phones while products such as karaoke machines may be discontinued.

Mr Dunstone said much of Tandy's recent growth had come from mobile phones which in the last quarter accounted for 35 per cent of its sales.

Tandy recorded a loss of £1.1m in the year to June 1998 on sales of £103m. However, the group is expected to break even in the current year. Its same-store sales over Christ-

mas were 17 per cent up on last year.

Carphone Warehouse was founded 10 years ago and now has a chain of 180 UK stores plus another 139 in continental Europe. It recorded sales of £150m last year.

Commenting on the deal, Mr Dunstone said: "Tandy is a good business with an excellent infrastructure and a great deal of untapped potential. Following a rationalisation programme, the stores have been gaining market share for the last 16 months and have just enjoyed a very successful Christmas."

The 1,500 staff employed by Walsall-based Tandy will be retained, Carphone Warehouse said.

Charles Dunstone, founder of Carphone Warehouse, said the Tandy name will be retained and that there are no

Portsmouth jumps 10% on rival offers

BY ANDREW VERTY

RIVAL news company, and Trinity, the media group which recently made an unsuccessful offer for the Mirror Group.

Three of Portsmouth's biggest shareholders yesterday took the opportunity to take profits. Shares in the group have sharply underperformed the FT All-Share index for most of the last five years.

Phillips & Drew sold more than half of its stake and hung on to 5.2 per cent, while Aberforth reduced its holding from 5.2 to 2.3 per cent. Mercury Asset Management also sold more than half its stake, leaving it with 2.3 per cent.

The outcome of the battle now lies in the hands of two families, the Storeys and the Cairns, who, together with associates and directors, own 40 per cent of the group. Portsmouth claims to have their support.

Anthony De Larraga, a media analyst at WestLB Panmure, described Johnston as "like a dog to Portsmouth's lamp-post. It is marking out its territory."

Bonanza in hi-tech mergers

THE VALUE of mergers and acquisitions in the global computer, telecommunications and media sectors almost doubled in 1998 as consolidation among the world's hi-tech industries gathered pace, according to a report published today, writes Peter Thiel Larsen.

Broadview, the M&A consultancy specialising in technology, calculates that the total value of hi-tech deals reached \$500bn last year – up 87 per cent from 1997, when it was \$282bn.

Mega-mergers between US telecom giants – including the merger of former Baby Bells SBC and Ameritech, as well as Bell Atlantic and GTE – accounted for almost half of the value of hi-tech M&A deals around the world.

The report also shows a growing interest in technology in Europe, with the number of hi-tech floatations on this side of the Atlantic rising above the number in the US. During 1998, 155 technology companies floated on European exchanges, compared with 147 in the US.

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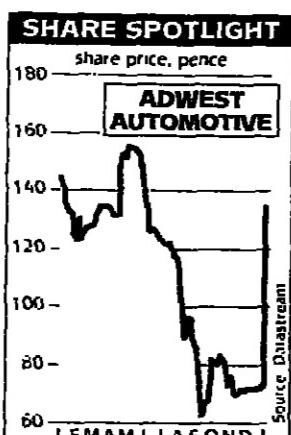
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| 413 295 American Pk | 590.0 +2.0 63 152 1135 | 407 175 Inter-Tech 50 | 375 425 48 133 000 | 43 RJD Foods 46.0 +0.0 47 360 | 407 175 Inter-Tech 50 | 375 425 48 133 000 | 43 RJD Foods 46.0 +0.0 47 360 | |
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Footsie swings as bid fever runs rampant

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN



HARD PRESSED Waverley Mining, where Ofex-traded Corporate Resolve is bidding for a stake, was the subject of three big trades, strengthening suspicions that a bid for full control is on the way.

Bank nominee

companies were active: one picked up 4.11 per cent and another 6.93 per cent to take its interest to 11.53 per cent. And obscure Patersons of Greenoakhill acquired 13.03 per cent. Waverley shares held at 6.5p.

And then, after the market closed, it became apparent that the rumoured Federal-Mogul strike at LucasVarity, the car components group, could be near. Lucas had contented itself with repeating an earlier statement that strategic discussions with various groups continued. Then Federal, the US group which took over T&N, said it was considering a 280p a share offer

OLD FASHIONED takeover fever gripped the stock market. A steady flow of deals – and rumours of more to come – provided much of the action as Footsie, in a volatile session, swung more than 150 points.

Four groups admitted for the first time that they were involved in corporate action, several others were caught in bid speculation, and there were rumblings in some established takeover situations.

Electra, the investment trust, confirmed it had been approached by 3i group and its shares spiralled 110p to 68.5p; 3i formed 14p to 63p. Adwest

Automotives revealed it was involved in talks that could lead to a 150p a share offer and jumped 60.5p to 134p.

Condom maker LIG received an "unsolicited" approach, jumping 35p to 163.5p, and Gremlins, a computer games group, surged 26p to 100p after spotting possible predators.

peake; now Shorewood Packaging may counter.

House of Fraser jumped 8p to 25p with rumours persisting of a strike. Shami Ahmed, creator of the Joe Bloggs jeans empire, is circling with Chelsfield property group, which formed 12.5p to 27.6p.

Securicor, as the rumour was revised it was in talks with BT over its Calnet stake, gained 17.75p to 57.25p.

Other stories included a GEC bid for Philips' and Siemens' medical electronic operations, and of a BG assault on Monument Oil & Gas, up 2.25p to 36p. The speculation also engulfed Telspec, an electronics group that advanced 11.5p to 69.5p, and Vaux, the hotelier on the verge of selling its breweries, 11p to 244.5p.

Servicair, the aircraft support group, was little changed at 21.6p after Framlington, one of its main shareholders, lifted its stake to 9.76 per cent, buying shares above the 200p level of the Amey offer.

Sears was little changed at 356.5p as Philip Green's vehicle moved to 52.9 per cent of the shares but, underlining that not all bid stories end happily, the Lady in Leisure fitness group fell 27.5p to 95p against a 246.5p peak.

Footsie ended 19.7 points higher at 5,880.9. Supporting indices were mixed, with bid action helping the mid cap to a 6.1-point gain to 4,835.2 but the small cap relapsed a further 1.7 points to 2,091.4.

Cable & Wireless Communications gained 27.5p to 780p as Morgan Stanley lifted its target price to 850p, but its Cable & Wireless parent softened 7.5p to 849p although Henderson Crushwaite calculated that even without Hong Kong Telecom the shares were worth 820p.

Banks were weak. Although a windfall tax on profits was ruled out, the market offered little support with Royal Bank of Scotland down 47p to 1,025.5p and National Westminster Bank 38p to 1,110p. HSBC had the additional constraint of unease over China as

Field, a packaging group, improved 21p to 337.5p as a second US offer was signalled. The company has agreed a 320p a share bid from Ches-

GR, the insurer, added 9.25p to 378.5p as the market awaited the Royal & Sun Alliance terms. Royal, seemingly on hopes that its not particularly popular offer will be topped, rose 19.25p to 484.5p.

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| Fund | Stk | Buy | +/- | Yld | Infl. | Int. | % Chg % |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|---------|
| ABN AMRO Pensions Ltd | | | | | | | |
| Growth Income | 32.20 | 24.02 | -1.7 | 1.25 | 3.0 | | |
| Equity Income | 15.71 | 12.80 | -2.9 | 0.93 | 5.00 | | |
| Small Income | 30.78 | 26.14 | -4.6 | 0.93 | 5.00 | | |
| High Income | 57.50 | 61.17 | -4.13 | 7.36 | 5.00 | | |
| Global Fund | 101.88 | 101.30 | -0.58 | 0.94 | 5.00 | | |
| All Funds Total | | | | | | | |
| 4 Battlebridge Lane, London SE1 2BB | | | | | | | |
| Tel: 071 578 7078 | | | | | | | |
| American General | 55.18 | 38.84 | -8.0 | -1.67 | 0.17 | 5.00 | |
| American Assets | 10.00 | 8.00 | -2.0 | 0.00 | 5.00 | | |
| American Strategy | 17.67 | 15.94 | -1.71 | 0.00 | 5.00 | | |
| Asia Pac | 69.95 | 64.74 | -1.71 | 1.00 | 5.00 | | |
| Emerging Europe | 10.20 | 8.00 | -2.20 | 0.00 | 5.00 | | |
| Emerging Income | 57.50 | 61.17 | -4.13 | 7.36 | 5.00 | | |
| Global Income | 101.88 | 101.30 | -0.58 | 0.94 | 5.00 | | |
| Family | | | | | | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | | | | | | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | 101.57 | 95.36 | -1.57 | 0.00 | 1.00 | | |
| American Income | 105.70 | 100.00 | -1.80 | 1.10 | 5.00 | | |
| US Growth & Inc | 82.74 | 81.50 | -1.25 | 2.00 | 5.00 | | |
| UK Smaller Cos | 123.20 | 130.00 | 0.20 | 0.50 | 5.00 | | |
| Charter Fund | 95.60 | 97.99 | -1.02 | 0.10 | 0.00 | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | | | | | | | |
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| American Income | 105.70 | 100.00 | -1.80 | 1.10 | 5.00 | | |
| US Growth & Inc | 82.74 | 81.50 | -1.25 | 2.00 | 5.00 | | |
| UK Smaller Cos | 123.20 | 130.00 | 0.20 | 0.50 | 5.00 | | |
| Charter Fund | 95.60 | 97.99 | -1.02 | 0.10 | 0.00 | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | | | | | | | |
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| American Income | 105.70 | 100.00 | -1.80 | 1.10 | 5.00 | | |
| US Growth & Inc | 82.74 | 81.50 | -1.25 | 2.00 | 5.00 | | |
| UK Smaller Cos | 123.20 | 130.00 | 0.20 | 0.50 | 5.00 | | |
| Charter Fund | 95.60 | 97.99 | -1.02 | 0.10 | 0.00 | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | | | | | | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | 101.57 | 95.36 | -1.57 | 0.00 | 1.00 | | |
| American Income | 105.70 | 100.00 | -1.80 | 1.10 | 5.00 | | |
| US Growth & Inc | 82.74 | 81.50 | -1.25 | 2.00 | 5.00 | | |
| UK Smaller Cos | 123.20 | 130.00 | 0.20 | 0.50 | 5.00 | | |
| Charter Fund | 95.60 | 97.99 | -1.02 | 0.10 | 0.00 | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | | | | | | | |
| Barclays Global Investors Ltd | 101.57 | 95.36 | -1.57 | 0.00 | 1.00 | | |
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| US Growth & Inc | 82.74 | 81.50 | -1.25 | 2.00 | 5.00 | | |
| UK Smaller Cos | 123.20 | 130.00 | 0.20 | 0.50 | 5.00 | | |
| Charter Fund | 95.60 | 97.99 | -1.02 | 0.10 | 0.00 | | |
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SPORT

Cricket: England's bright young talent struggles to make his mark as injuries and lack of confidence take their toll



Ben Hollioake assumes the role of spectator at the Melbourne Cricket Ground: 'Sometimes, because you did so well early on, the public thinks that's what you should achieve every time'

'The General' in mood for fight

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY

HE IS known as The General. This is because when Arjuna Ranatunga leads Sri Lanka he struts about as if he was Napoleon. Napoleon was not a diplomat either.

Thus, on the eve of his appearance before the match referee, Peter Van Der Merwe, two days after an apparent series of breaches of the game's code of conduct, Ranatunga effectively told everyone where they could shove it.

A different fellow, with a more uncertain view of himself and his place in the game, might have kept silent until after the hearing. But Ranatunga could not resist speaking to the television station in Adelaide the day before he met Van Der Merwe.

He steadfastly refused to apologise or to express regrets for his unprecedented behaviour on Saturday towards an umpire he clearly did not respect so much as scorn. "I feel I was standing by a colleague of mine, who is the best bowler Sri Lanka has produced," he said. His manager, Ranjit Fernando, could hardly have acted with more decorum.

Ranatunga played the key role in Saturday's match at Adelaide Oval between England and Sri Lanka. It was Muttiah Muralitharan, the off-spinner, who was no-balled for throwing, but it was Ranatunga who waded into battle on his behalf.

He argued with the umpire, Ross Emerson, lecturing him before leading his players to the perimeter of the pitch for 15 minutes while negotiations about continuing the match took place.

When play resumed he put Muralitharan on at Emerson's end and insisted the umpire stand where Ranatunga wanted by constantly scratching a line in the soil. Emerson said at one point: "I'm the umpire, I'm in control," which at that point was a patent exaggeration.

Ranatunga then took gamesmanship to its brink to mastermind the defeat of England with a wicket and two balls to spare. He looked as unruffled as ever as he spoke in his hotel room to Channel 7. The people who appointed umpires, he said, should appoint the people to do a job.

There had been no intention of staging a walk-off, he insisted, which is not what it looked like to anybody watching. "We never wanted to stop the game, that's for sure."

Only snatches of the interview were shown and the full version will go out on Sunday, when Ranatunga will have been dealt with. This is probably just as well since he was clearly in no mood for contrition.

Ranatunga, who has led Sri Lanka in more than 170 one-day internationals and yields much broader power than that of captain, said it was impossible to go back to the way things were. Sri Lanka may as well go back to playing friendlies if they changed their style.

Arguments of a similar conciliatory nature submitted to Van Der Merwe may not exactly constitute a plea for leniency. But Ranatunga, ever smiling, is serious about this and clearly wanted to go down fighting for Murali. As good generals do.

■ Ricky Ponting, the Australian batsman, has appeared before the Australian Cricket Board to face disciplinary action for being involved in a drunken brawl in a Sydney bar. Ponting was given a suspended fine of \$5000 (£2,000) and banned for another game in addition to the two matches he has already missed.

Hollioake feels the hard knocks

BEN HOLLOOKE was asked what he had learned on the tour of Australia. His answer came certainly and quickly and despite the smile with which it was delivered, the underlying sadness was unmistakable. "I have learned I don't want to happen to me again what's happened to me on this tour," he said.

He left England in October still as the brightest of bright young things and three months on he knew he was in serious danger of returning to England as the forgotten man. He played in none of the Test matches and after six games in the one-day series he remained the only one of England's squad of 16 not to have played. Selection in the seventh was possible but he was not exactly gathering extra supplies of kit whitener in preparation for the moment.

Such is Hollioake's depth of natural assurance that he was still able to remember the lines more commonly associated with him. "To some degree the confidence has taken a knock," he said. "You start to think, 'Am I good enough', not 'I am good enough', but it hasn't taken such a knock that if I got picked for the next game I wouldn't back myself to get a hundred."

So he might, but whatever he achieves in the remainder of the Carlton & United series he cannot conceal the truth that his first senior tour has been an unwelcome and unexpected experience, and that not everything will come easily. He sustained an injury early on in Australia

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY
in Adelaide

and by the time he recovered, even a losing team was difficult to break into.

What opportunities he had failed to grasp. In the notorious defeat in Hobart by Australia A he was dismissed on a flat pitch by an occasional bowler, Matthew Elliott. Subsequently he was confronted with the criticism of David Graveney, the tour manager and chairman of the England selectors.

Graveney might have appeared slightly harsh in observing that Hollioake could not continue to live on two performances a long time ago (the 63 he made on his international debut against Australia and the 98 he made in the Benson and Hedges Cup final) but he was perhaps attempting a stab at psychology.

Hollioake defended himself robustly. He said his one-day county form had been sound last summer and that his bowling in all forms of cricket had been consistently good. But he must know, if he has developed the capacity to examine his own performances, that he has to do more to convince the selectors now. Making a maiden first-class start for Surrey would be a start.

It is probable that Hollioake is a big-game player and it is at least arguable that the selectors, having picked him at the age of 19, should simply have kept faith with him. As

it is, he has played only three Tests and six one-day internationals since he was initially selected in both forms of the game in 1997, and he could easily have trebled both numbers.

Hollioake's relaxed approach has also raised concerns, but presumably the selectors knew his character before they dallied with his potential. "It's something that I'm always going to be up against," he said. "But the management knows that when it's time to practise, I practise as hard as anyone."

Having said that, I know I'm not the best netter in the world. You've got to have nets to keep in touch but there have certainly been times when I've had a bit of netting. Even when I'm in my best form on the park it's still hard work on the nets."

He lifted up his shirt to reveal a bruise on his chest inflicted in the nets while batting. It probably would not have happened in the middle, but the middle is somewhere that has become a foreign country.

Hollioake is an instinctive cricketer, which is what England need. The trouble with that, allied to a reluctance for nets, is that technical faults which occur are not so easily removed. There was a time last season, when Hollioake was called up to the England squad, that the management was said to be somewhat astonished at the way his bat had gained looseness. His chest-on bowling technique, too,

does not allow much margin for error if he is to make effective use of his bounce.

England have already invested too much in him to let him be wasted. What they have to decide is whether to ensure he accrues some county form (and that can be meaningless) or select him regardless, which will serve a purpose only if they keep on picking him and have got it right.

Hollioake is an extremely affable fellow and if he has a high opinion of his ability, that is as it should be. Others have encouraged him in this regard. He did not score that resplendent half-century against the Aussies on a lovely early summer at Lord's by having self-doubt.

"Sometimes, because you did so well early on, the public thinks that is what you should achieve every time. Maybe that's what I thought I should every achieve every time."

"I don't know what my form is like because I haven't played. But you never know what can happen. I may not play any of the games but then somebody gets injured and I could be the player of the final."

■ Mark Taylor, the captain of Australia, has been named Australian of the Year. The award comes amid speculation that Taylor is about to retire from the game. He admitted after receiving the highest honour available that possible retirement was weighing heavily on his mind. "I just want to enjoy the next two days with my family," he said.



Happier days: Ben Hollioake hits out on his way to 63 against Australia at Lord's in 1996

PA

Not all the best rugby is played at Twickenham

"WE'RE GIVING England 48 hours to come back in," a colleague on the sports desk of this paper said to me a week ago when I was fretting to him on the telephone about whether I had sufficiently covered the stirring events of the day.

In the event, the rover's return took rather less time, nearer 24 hours. It was celebrated by Bill Beaumont and Brian Balister of the Rugby Football Union, and Allan Hosie of the Five Nations committee, over pints of beer in the Glasgow pub (or bar, for Glasgow does not possess what I would call proper pubs) Drum and Monkey, which seems an appropriate name somehow in the circumstances.

Balister and the RFU's "chief executive", Francis Baron, remind me of the two little dicky birds sit-



ALAN
WATKINS

ting on the wall in the rhyme: Fly away Brian, fly away Frank; Come back Brian, come back Frank. They remind me also of George Brown, the Labour cabinet minister of the 1960s. Brown was forever threatening to resign and being

dissuaded from taking this course. Every so often he would flounce out but would be persuaded to return to the fold in... well, in about the time it takes for the RFU to restore England to the Five Nations' Championship.

There came a point, however, when Brown resigned over the relatively trivial matter of a lack of consultation with him about the closing of the banks during a financial crisis. And this time his resignation was accepted. That was the end of George Brown.

I am not predicting that the same thing is going to happen to England, but there is clearly a danger of it happening.

In the *Independent* on Sunday two days ago, Chris Rea wrote that the real reason why the RFU's rep-

resentatives were behaving as they were had less to do with the apportionment of Sky monies, French television arrangements or the entry of Italy into the Five Nations than with the union's wish to set up a new competition involving the southern hemisphere nations. This competition would include England and, preferably, France as well but exclude Italy and the Celtic nations.

I was encouraged that Rea's view was more or less the same as mine, which I expressed here last week: that the evidence is that New Zealand, Australia and South Africa are quite happy with their present arrangements, though they may undertake more (in my opinion, too many) European tours when it suits them to do so. But they have

no wish to enter into any permanent relationship with England; even less so if France exclude themselves from it.

The evidence, again, is that the French have an affectionate regard for the Five (soon to be Six) Nations, and have no wish to leave home to take up with new partners who may possess all kinds of strange ways. Not even the most tunnel-visioned England supporter would maintain that, season in and season out, England have been the superior team to France over the past decade or so.

Certainly the English revival of the 1980s was a triumph for players and managers: for Geoff Cooke, Jack Rowell, Will Carling and Brian Moore, to name only a few. But times change. Moore is a solicitor partner for Craig Quinnell.

The kindest thing to say about Scotland is that they may surprise us yet. On current form, it looks as if the good-value bet is Ireland. Admittedly Dick Best's first-choice London Irish have, at most, only half a dozen Irish players in the side. Even so, Conor O'Shea, Justin Bishop, Niall Woods and Malcolm O'Kelly will be even better players this season than they were before.

And if Ulster win the European Cup at Dublin on Saturday, Irish confidence will be trebled. Jonathan Bell and Rob Henderson (if fit) are not going to be frightened by the Scott Gibbs of this world. David Humphreys at last looks like fulfilling his promise and potential.

Perhaps the RFU should accept for the time being that not all the best rugby in the British Isles is played at Twickenham.

Masters
change
hinders
Europe

Business can pick up after winter break

By ANDY FAHRELL
Former winner from Kempton Park's seven-year-old team
has been beaten by the likes of the
namesake, former champion, and
former runner-up.

THE GOOD news for Britain's

rainers over the last couple of

weeks has been that Paul

Nicholls' horses have been

enjoying a midwinter break.

The bad news, as announced by

a treble at Kempton on Sat-

urday, is that the batteries have

been recharged, and they are

now ready to pick up where

they left off.

But there is one important

exception. Nicholls will be hop-

ing that See More Business, the

best chaser in his yard, can pro-

duce anything but a repeat

performance of his last outing

when he runs in the Pillar

Chase at Cheltenham this

weekend. See More Business

started favourite at 11-4 for the

King George VI Chase on Box-

ing Day, a race he had won a

year earlier, but was beaten be-

fore the leaders had set out on

the final circuit. Teetot Mill, the

winner, replaced him at the top

of the Gold Cup betting, while See More Business was

pushed out to an insulating 14-1.

The reason, if any, for that

desperate run is as unclear now

as it was then, and the heavy

going is all Nicholls can offer:

"Often you have a reason either

in the preparation or after-

wards, but we've seen abso-

lutely nothing," he said yes-

terday. "They called the

ground at Kempton the same

as it was the year before, but

there was no comparison, it was

LEICESTER

HYPERION

1.40 Fortria Rosie Dawn 3.10 Astral Invasion
2.10 King's Banker 3.40 Cherrymore
2.40 Smarty 4.10 Tom Pinch

GONG: Soft (heavy patch by the winning post). All chase card.

Right-hand, undulating course. Run 250yds.

Course is 2m SE of site of AE, Leicestershire (London, St Pancras - Shefford line) 2m. ADMISSION: Club £10 (OAPs £8). Picnic car park £25 adults and car occupiers. Free refreshments. CAR PARK: Free.

LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 10-2 (53%), M. Nicholls 11-2 (21%). N Henderson 10-2 (31.3%). M. Hill 8-16 (16%). T. Twiston-Davies 7-23 (24%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 10-5 (53%). A Maresca 12-20 (20%). M A Fitzhenry 11-20 (22%). Osborne 7-17 (18%). G Bradley 7-19 (17%). W Marston 7-11 (16%).

FAVOURITES: 9/4 from 273 races (odds-on 34%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Jason's Boy (40).

1.40 STONESBY NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,000 added 2m 11yds Penalty Value £2,310

1. 2004P FOLLOW MY CUE (2) (D) Chertsey Cond Co Ld (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
2. 2004P RUMBLE (2) (D) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
3. 2004P FIGHTING THREES (2) (D) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
4. 0402P SANCRIFT (19) (T) (J) Fox (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...C Llewellyn (5)
5. 4-0402 REMEMBER STAR (2) (G) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

- declared -

BETTING: 11-10 Fortria Rosie Dawn, 7-4 Follow My Cue, 8-1 Fighting Times, 16-1 Remember Star, 20-1 Remond.

No corresponding race

FORM GUIDE

Follow My Cue: Returned to a shorter trip when successful at Uttoxeter (2m, soft) last 90s out of her handicap that day and runs off a 50 higher mark here.

Fortria Rosie Dawn: Had 15 lengths in hand when unshifting her rider at the final fence at Wincanton (2m, good) last month. Disappointed at Ludlow (2m, good) last time, but won another chance in this race and ran well again. No mark here, but would be a good bet for her next run at Ludlow (2m, soft) the month and makes her chasing debut.

Sandrift: Maiden, has shown little aptitude for fences in 4 outings this season.

Flattened by her 3rd (31 lengths) to Native Charm at Warwick (2m, good) so soft last month.

Remember Star: Poor selling horse, made mistakes and pulled up on her chasing debut in March. No show on her only outing over fences this season at Taunton (2m), good to soft last month.

VERDICT: A straight follow for Follow My Cue and FORTRIA ROSIE DAWN looks the only conclusion with Venetia Williams' mare recently preferred despite her record of completing only twice in her 7 outings over fences. She put in a sound round of jumping until blundering and unseating Shani Kelly when about 15 lengths in command at Wincanton last month and deserves a change of luck.

2.10 BROOK MAIDEN CHASE (CLASS F) £3,000 added 2m 7f 11yds Penalty Value £2,213

1. 1-2002 EVER BLESSED (2) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
2. 1-2002 KENTISH BARD (17) (D) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
3. 1-2002 KING'S BANKER (20) (D) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
4. 1-2002 RASHAWN (25) (D) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
5. 1-2002 REMONDE STAR (2) (G) (Mc) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

- declared -

BETTING: 11-10 King's Banker, 8-1 Kentish Bard, 10-1 Remonde Star, 15-1 Rashawn, 20-1 Remond.

No corresponding race

FORM GUIDE

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3.10 DANIEL LAMBERT HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 11yds Penalty Value £2,768

1. 1-2004 PLAY GAMES (2) (D) (J) O'Sullivan 9 11 10...A Maguire (5)
2. 05223 CENTAUR EXPRESS (2) (D) (J) O'Sullivan 9 11 10...A Maguire (5)
3. 05223 MACHALINE (18) & D. A. Gamble 9 11 10...C Llewellyn (5)
4. 2-0523 REACH THE CLOUDS (20) (D) (J) O'Sullivan 9 11 10...A Maguire (5)
5. 0-0523 ASTRAL INVASION (24) (D) (J) O'Sullivan 9 11 10...A Maguire (5)

- declared -

BETTING: 5-2 Play Games, 3-1 Reach The Clouds, 7-2 Astral Invasion, 4-1 Machaline, 9-2 Centaur Express.

No corresponding race

FORM GUIDE

Play Games: Most consistent this season and won for the 4th time from 5 outings at Sandown (2m, soft) last month. Has found some weak races and more to do off an ab-

ove mark.

Reach The Clouds: Won most consistently this season and won for the 4th time from 5 outings at Sandown (2m, soft) last month. Has found some weak races and more to do off an ab-

ove mark.

Astral Invasion: Won most consistently this season and won for the 4th time from 5 outings at Sandown (2m, soft) last month. Has found some weak races and more to do off an ab-

ove mark.

Machaline: Won most consistently this season and won for the 4th time from 5 outings at Sandown (2m, soft) last month. Has found some weak races and more to do off an ab-

ove mark.

Centaur Express: Won most consistently this season and won for the 4th time from 5 outings at Sandown (2m, soft) last month. Has found some weak races and more to do off an ab-

ove mark.

- declared -

FONTWELL

HYPERION

1.50 Pagasonic 2.20 Litchener 2.50 Effectual 3.20 Artequin De Sou 3.50 Another Chancer 4.20 Stormhill Stag

GONG: Soft

Left-hand, undulating course. Figure-of-eight chase course. Tight circuit, not suitable for long-distance horses.

Course is 5 miles at junction of A29 and A27, Barnham (Brixton) 2m. Tattersalls 53 (accompanied under 16s free); Silver Ring 53 (OAPs half-price). CAR PARK: Free.

LEADING TRAINERS: P Nicholls 26-55 (54%). M Pipe 25-10 (25%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 37-97 (23%). P Ridge 21-23 (21%). R Dunlop 22-25 (24%). J Osborne 15-51 (24%).

FAVOURITES: 1-25-25 (25%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: Eclipse (320).

1.50 FAREHAM HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 4Y 2m 11yds Penalty Value £2,710

1. 00402 LORD OF LOVE (29) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
2. 0202 ROBORANT (17) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
3. 0202 BANISTER (23) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
4. 0202 DEATH OR GLORY (14) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)
5. 0202 AVEN (8) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

6. 5 PAGASONIC (19) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

7. 0202 HILLTOP ROSE (24) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

8. 03442 MYSTERIOUS MISS (9) (C) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

9. 03442 SISTER ROSA (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

10. 03442 ROBINSON (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

11. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

12. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

13. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

14. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

15. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

16. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

17. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

18. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

19. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

20. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

21. 03442 ROBUST (27) (D) (J) McCar 9 11 10...A C Cope (5)

</div

Liverpool make £2m offer to Fowler

LIVERPOOL HAVE made a new contract offer to Robbie Fowler, worth an estimated £2m a year, and hope to clinch his signing this week.

Fowler and his representative, George Scott, met Anfield officials at the weekend to thrash out a compromise deal after months of haggling. The England striker rejected the previous offer of £15,000 per week and was told there would be no more money from the club, but there has been an increase in the package.

FOOTBALL

By ALAN NIXON

With wages, signing-on fees and loyalty payments Fowler will become the best-paid player at Anfield and one of the top earners in British football.

The Manchester United captain, Roy Keane, has given his club a scare by putting contract talks on ice for the rest of the season. The Republic of Ireland international has said that he does not want to discuss his

£40,000 per week demands until the summer.

United want Keane to sort out a new contract now, rather than have him enter the last year of his present deal with the prospect of a lucrative free transfer at the end of next season. Keane said: "I will only sign if the contract is right for me. I want the club to pay me what I think I'm worth. United have been good for me, but I've also been good for them."

The chances of the Brazilian forward Juninho returning to

English football with either his former club, Middlesbrough, or Aston Villa appear to have increased. The Spanish club's coach, Arturo Sacchi, has admitted that Juninho does not feature in his first-team plans.

Juninho's father and agent, Osvaldo, hinted that Middlesbrough were the favourites to win his son's signature. "Middlesbrough have a good chance of signing him," he said. "We will talk to their chairman, Steve Gibson, next week. We get on with him very well."

The Cameroon international midfielder Marc-Vivien Foé yesterday completed his move from Lens to West Ham - according to officials at the French club.

The Yugoslavian international defender Slobodan Komljenovic hopes to seal a move to the Premiership after arriving at Southampton to begin a week's trial. The 28-year-old is valued at £2.5m by his German club, MSV Duisburg.

Barnsley expect to sign the Queen's Park Rangers striker

Mike Sheron for £1.5m today. The fee would equal the Oakwell club record.

The Crystal Palace mid-fielder Fan Zhiyi has escaped severe punishment from the Football Association despite pleading guilty to improper behaviour towards the referee Terry Hehir.

The Chinese international, alleged to have manhandled the Newton Aycliffe official at the end of a highly charged 3-2 defeat against West Bromwich at The Hawthorns in November,

has been banned for one match and fined £750.

Dundee have signed Coventry City's Scottish Under-21 international mid-fielder Gavin Strachan, the 20-year-old son of the Highfield Road manager Gordon Strachan, on loan until the end of the season.

The German mid-fielder, Andreas Mayer, has completed a £200,000 transfer to Aberdeen from the Norwegian club, Rosenborg Trondheim. The former Coventry target played for the Dons against Man-

chester United in Teddy Scott's testimonial last week.

Hartlepool United want Chris Waddle to become their new manager, in succession to Mick Taaffe. The former England winger, who was in charge at Burnley last season, is now helping out with coaching at Sheffield Wednesday.

Terry Christie has left Stevenage after six and a half years in charge to become the new manager of Alloa. He succeeds Tom Hendrie, who has moved to St Mirren.

O'Neill plots fall of past heroes

MARTIN O'NEILL, the Leicester City manager, is intent on shattering the Wembley dreams of the club he supported as a youngster when his side takes on Sunderland in the first leg of the Worthington Cup semi-final tonight.

O'Neill's boyhood hero was Charlie Hurley, the former Sunderland and Northern Ireland hard man and he still has great affection for the First Division leaders. But sentiment will be put aside as he attempts to lead Leicester to their second League Cup final appearance in three years after their 1997 triumph over Middlesbrough.

O'Neill said: "They [Sunderland] were always my team when I was growing up. I have always had a soft spot for them. But any time I have been in opposition to them as a player or manager that sentiment has gone out of the window. This time will be no different."

O'Neill will check the fitness of the striker Tony Cottee, who missed Saturday's FA Cup defeat by Coventry with a calf strain. If he is ruled out, then O'Neill's options are limited on a partner for Emile Heskey. At the weekend he broke up Muzzy Izzet's effective midfield partnership with Neil Lennon and pushed him into the forward line.

The Sunderland captain, Kevin Ball, said: "If we want to beat them, we've got to match their determination and spirit."



Emmanuel Petit becomes the seventh Arsenal player to be sent off this season during Sunday's cup tie Empics

Bergkamp fuels conspiracy theory

The striker's claim that Arsenal are being persecuted has provoked an instant response. By Nick Harris

about the reputation before the game then it can count against us. We have players booked and sometimes it's hard to understand why."

Philip Don, the Premier League referees' officer, said he was sure that there was no anti-Highbury conspiracy. "Referees go out to do a job and call it as they see it," he said, and added it was not in his officials' interests to make victims of anyone. "Referees cannot afford to go and victimise teams."

"Strong language to an assistant is the same as to a referee," Don said. "It's a sending-off offence without a shadow of a doubt."

Petit's dismissal on Sunday was the second time he has seen red this season, the first occasion being against Charlton in August. His red card at Wolves was due to bad language and he incurred one of his two yellow cards at Charlton for dissent.

Although Lee Dixon, Martin Keown, Ray Parlour, Gilles Grimandi and Patrick Vieira have all also been sent off since last August, only Dixon has been dismissed for mistimed fouls alone committed during the course of a match.

Ray Parlour was dismissed against Leno for kicking Cyril Rool's head; Grimandi was sent off for butting Leeds' Alan

making errors]. At least 80 per cent of Premier League referees get marks of seven (out of 10) or above. And this season I think it's around 95 per cent."

Although he was unwilling to comment on specific cases, Don said that if a referee believed a player had used abusive language to any official, then the rules had been enforced. Steve Dunn, officiating at the Wolves game, said Petit was sent off for abusing a linesman.

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Smith, and Vieira was shown a red card for elbowing Charlton's Neil Redfearn.

Keown may have had his ban rescinded on appeal following his involvement as a peace-maker in the Paolo Di Canio incident at Hillsborough, but Arsenal would still seem to be the victims of their own inability to control tempers, whatever provocation they are at times

subjected to and whatever they believe the pre-conceived attitudes of the match officials to be.

For all their manager's protestations of victimisation - "I am very upset by what has happened and I just ask for an honest referee, that's all," Wenger said on Sunday - there is a feeling, even among Arsenal stalwarts, that referees are not

entirely to blame for the north Londoners' problems.

The Gunners' former manager, Terry Neil, conceded: "One thing is sure and that's it's not a healthy situation. I'm sure words have been spoken in private [about behaviour at the club]." He added: "You don't win what Arsenal football club have over the years with out being competitive."

"The people I've got most sympathy for in football are referees."

Part of Arsenal's problem, Neil added, is that officials have to act on strict mandates from Fifa. "People don't get sent off these days for sticking one on someone," he said. "It only takes a word, a gesture."

Both of which, Arsenal players seem to have a fondness for

| WENGER'S RED CARD REIGN | | |
|---|-----------------|-------------|
| 26 Nov 1996 | Steve Bould | v Liverpool |
| 30 Nov 1996 | Tony Adams | CC |
| 21 Dec 1996 | Ian Wright | PL |
| 1 Jan 1997 | John Hartson | PL |
| 1 Jan 1997 | Dennis Bergkamp | PL |
| 1 Mar 1997 | Tony Adams | PL |
| 14 Oct 1997 | Jason Crowe | CC |
| 26 Oct 1997 | Emmanuel Petit | PL |
| 17 Jan 1998 | Patrick Vieira | PL |
| 18 Feb 1998 | Patrick Vieira | CC |
| 17 Mar 1998 | Dennis Bergkamp | FA |
| 31 Mar 1998 | Martin Keown | PL |
| 29 Aug 1998 | Emmanuel Petit | PL |
| 9 Sep 1998 | Lee Dixon | PL |
| 26 Sep 1998 | Martin Keown | PL |
| 25 Nov 1998 | Ray Parlour | EC |
| 20 Dec 1998 | Gilles Grimandi | PL |
| 28 Dec 1998 | Patrick Vieira | PL |
| 24 Jan 1999 | Emmanuel Petit | FA |
| CC: Coca-Cola Cup; PL: Premier League; FA: FA Cup; EC: European Cup | | |

held South Africa to a 1-1 draw. Meanwhile, the World Cup finalists Nigeria looked far from convincing in their 2-0 home win over Burundi.

The embarrassing draw in Eritrea was a further setback for Cameroon. They were suspended briefly at the start of the year by Fifa, world football's ruling body, for refusing to implement a new football administration structure.

"We were let down by our

defender Mark Fish, who plays for Bolton, said. "They never created enough for the strikers to have any real chances."

In Nigeria, goals from Garba Lawal and Femi George gave the home team victory over Burundi in the first competitive match in charge for their new coach, Thijis Libregts - but an anticipated goal deluge did not materialise as Burundi looked the better side.

As for South Africa, a team loaded with Europe-based professionals were favourites to romp home against Mauritius. But Desiré Periatambé, who plays for the French Second Division club Troyes, struck a second-half equaliser after South Africa had led at half-time through the former Leeds striker, Phil Masinga.

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TODAY'S NUMBER

6

The number of men who went on trial in Moscow yesterday accused of the 1997 contract killing of the head of the Russian ice hockey federation. The case was postponed on three previous occasions after the main defendant was taken ill.

RUGBY UNION

NFL CUP: Quarter-final draw: Alveinians v Maidstone; Barnsley & Basinstoke v Kettering; Chelmsford & Stevenage v Stevenage; Ilkeston & Rotherham v Shrewsbury. Ties to be played on Saturday 13 February.

REGAL WELSH: Cardiff & Caerphilly (Cardiff) vs. Bala (Caerphilly); Carmarthen & Llanelli (Carmarthen) vs. Llanelli (Llanelli); Neath (Neath) vs. Bridgend (Bridgend); Pontypridd (Pontypridd) vs. Llanelli (Llanelli); Swansea (Swansea) vs. Neath (Neath). Ties to be played on Saturday 13 February.

SNOOKER: Masters: Final: Higgins (Ballymena) vs. Hendry (Lahinch). Ties to be played on Saturday 13 February.

SQUASH: Tournament of Champions (Grand Final): Final: Gaultier (England) vs. Gaultier (England). Ties to be played on Saturday 13 February.

TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

'I'd like to thank my Grandpa, my agent, and 84 hungry, star-struck, freelance, free-loading journalists'

What an emotional evening it was. Gwyneth Paltrow, quivering like a flower in the breeze as she accepted her Golden Globe award for best comedy actress in *Shakespeare in Love*, could not hold back the tears as she paid tribute to her sick grandfather, Jenna Elfman, honoured for her performance in the TV series *Dharma and Greg*, thanked her mother and father "for giving birth to me". Ed Harris's list of thank-yous for his best supporting actor award (*The Truman Show*) included God Himself - "for giving me the gift of life".

Sunday night's star-studded bash at the Beverly Hilton displayed all the senseless hyperbole, the sweeping proclamations of universal love, the tears, glitter and occasional flashes of genuine wit that we have come to expect from that archetypal Hollywood awards ceremony, the Oscars. Only these weren't the Oscars, but the Golden Globes - the influential, closely scrutinised precursor to the Academy Awards that have been described as a kind of New Hampshire primary of the Hollywood prize-giving season.

In a film world where marketing is king, and nominations for big awards translate into millions at the box office, the Globes are serious stuff - serious enough for every one of Sunday night's lucky winners, even if they were too emotional to remember the names of their co-stars, to pay reverent homage to the event's sponsors, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

Who?

Leaving the fate of one of Hollywood's biggest nights of the year in the hands of a bunch of journalists may seem suspect enough, but the Foreign Press Association does not even live up to the dubious respectability of its ponderous title. We are not talking about respected critics here, or even the carefully selected representatives of major newspapers and media organisations from around the world. No, the HFPA is little more than a pampered clique, an 82-member body largely made up of freelances and partners which jealously guards its privileges and makes it supremely difficult for outsiders - even bona fide reporters from major publications such as *Le Monde* - to penetrate its world of special advance screenings, celebrity lunches and all-expenses-paid trips to film festivals.

For years the HFPA was considered a bit of a joke, and film stars treated the Golden Globes - if they bothered to turn up at all - as an excuse to have a laugh, drink too much and josh each other at the podium microphone. But that was before the miracle-working powers of network television intervened.

Last year, 24 million people in the United States alone followed the proceedings on NBC; it attracts so much top-dollar advertising that a relatively unfilthy ceremony takes more than three hours to unspool on prime time. The for-

ign press's ability to predict, and possibly influence, the mainstream sensibilities of the Academy (four of the last five Oscar-winning films were also Golden Globe recipients) has simply overwhelmed the frequent ethical misgivings about a voting body that receives publicity perks and other favours from the makers of the films it is asked to pronounce upon.

Compared to the Academy, whose 5,000-odd members are all industry professionals and are banned from receiving any perks from the studios beyond videotapes of their films, the Foreign Press Association looks distinctly eccentric. Its members have included a retired engineer, the chair of the pan-African studies department at Cal State university, a man who markets automobiles, and a shop assistant in a hi-fi store.

The body has admitted that at least 40 per cent of its members are not full-time journalists, but the rules stipulate only that members should show proof of four published articles or broadcast pieces per year. There are an awful lot of submissions from writers claiming to write "for Costa Rican and Czech publications".

When *The Washington Post* published a widely publicised denunciation of the Foreign

Press Association two years ago, it discovered that a correspondent for *Le Monde* had been turned down for membership four or five times. Under the group's bylaws, a sitting member has the power of veto over any applicant - even one who works for a competing paper.

The attractions of membership are undeniable. Press screenings of new films are usually accompanied by lunch or dinner, and invariably followed up by exclusive interview opportunities with the director and leading actors. Foreign

BY ANDREW GUMBLE

press members are invariably showered with freebies - not just baseball caps and T-shirts, but valuable gifts such as a silver money clip to promote Martin Scorsese's movie *Casino*.

Trips to locations and film festivals are common, with the association usually paying for the flights and the studio picking up the hotel bill. Members who may spend much of the year pursuing entirely different forms of employment can find themselves on the receiving end of an all-expenses-paid return trip to Cannes or Venice.

Thanks to the Golden Globes, there is money galore for such enterprises. According to tax returns and other documents published in the entertainment newspaper *Variety*, the Foreign Press Association made \$1.5m from the 1997 event and - largely because of strict rules governing what non-profit organisations can and cannot spend money - has a cash pile of about \$2.5m.

There are plans to build a new headquarters, complete with state-of-the-art screening facilities. To the association's credit, it also gives increasing chunks of cash to charity.

Scent of a Woman. A few weeks earlier, the HFPA had been off in New York on a promotional trip that included interview time with Pacino. The scandal was muted by the fact that Pacino gave a genuinely impressive performance - one that also netted him the Best Actor Oscar.

Occasionally prominent film-makers have complained about lavishing so much attention on the foreign press. In 1988, the director Rob Reiner complained to *The New York Times* that the excessive press conferences he had given had seemed to be little more than an opportunity for HFPA members to have their photographs taken with their favourite movie stars. Such complaints are rare, however, because of the sheer power of the Hollywood publicity machine.

More often, stars and studios will actively cultivate the HFPA. After a press conference to promote *Casino*, in which she played the wife of a mafioso casino operator, Sharon Stone sent handwritten thank-you notes to each member. She went on to win the Golden Globe and an Oscar nomination. One of the HFPA's favourite char-

acters, the American Foundation for Aids Research, is chaired by Sharon Stone, and she is a regular fixture at the awards ceremony.

The complaints and press denunciations have had some effect. The current president of the Foreign Press Association, a German journalist called Heinz Voss, has promised a review of the association's admissions procedure. As part of its broadcasting agreement for the Golden Globes, NBC this year required that association members sign a waiver agreeing not to accept excessive gifts or hospitality.

The Washington Post reported that this year's awards were broadly in line with industry expectations, with *Shakespeare in Love*, *Saving Private Ryan* and *The Truman Show* winning the lion's share, that has not stopped gossip over some nominations. Terrence Malick's war epic *The Thin Red Line* received not a single mention - which irked the studio, Twentieth Century Fox, enough to point out that less than 50 per cent of the HFPA had turned up to the special screening.

Meanwhile *Patch Adams*, a Robin Williams comedy, earned itself a best film nomination in the comedy/musical section even though it was roundly panned by every leading newspaper.

None of these misgivings was aired at the ceremony itself, of course. The closest thing to sarcasm came from Jack Nicholson, recipient of a lifetime achievement award and a man too well established in the business to have much to lose. With his deadpan delivery and wickedly ambiguous smile, he said he particularly appreciated the award because it didn't come from a peer group. "The Hollywood foreign press is a loose group of guys and gals," he said. "You almost feel you could go out and have fun with them."

Otherwise, the tone was of impeccable deference. HFPA President Voss, a veteran writer for the Springer press group, perhaps summed it up best as he was introduced onto the stage - looking for all the world like a man who can't believe his good fortune at being the object of such prestigious adulation.

"To be a journalist, have an accent like Erich von Stroheim, and be kissed by Sharon Stone," he gushed. "Only in America."



Reuters

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• • •

After the Lords

Sir: I am alarmed that, although David Aaronovitch ("Some thoughts, your Lordship, on the reform of your House", 21 January) says that we need a "mostly elected, legitimate and powerful second chamber" he does not follow out the logic of this: it must be wholly elected to be legitimate and powerful.

It should represent different constituencies from MPs. Regions, particularly in England, need elected representation so that the whole of the United Kingdom can have sensible links with the European Union's important Council of Regions.

It should not include bishops or any other religious nominees. As a Methodist, I am only too aware of the baleful effects the entwining of church and state has had on both. It is 350 years since Cromwell tried unsuccessfully to reform our polity by root and branch reform; let us not miss another opportunity to become democratic.

JOHN D ANDERSON
Baldon, West Yorkshire

Sir: Lord Strathclyde has asked whether hereditary peers "are not entitled to know where we are heading" before leaving the stage.

The answer is unequivocally "No", if only because of the offensive manner in which they appear to have blackmailed our elected government into allowing some of their number a continuing voice in Parliament.

They should go and go now. No tumbrels await them in Parliament Square and for those with ambition and talent other avenues into politics are open.

The future of the second chamber depends on a clear definition of its functions; for example, whether these should continue to include those of the ultimate court of appeal for the UK and a number of overseas countries. From this, with three minutes' thought, its constitution will follow – though, as Houseman remarked, thought is arduous and three minutes is a long time.

BRIAN EMS
Ashburnham, East Sussex

Sir: If the House of Lords replacement is to be decided by popular vote, who are we likely to end up with? Sundry pop singers, sportspersons, TV "personalities" plus Richard Branson.

The country already has a pool of individuals of varied political persuasion with a proven record of working for the public, overseeing large budgets within tight spending limits, and political acumen. These are our retiring lord mayors. List the county, city and town councils with the 500 biggest budgets and each year the retiring mayor from one third of the list would serve for three years. The house would be far more representative than at present.

Even changes to signs would be minimal: simply change the name to "the House of Lord Mayors". R N FRANKLIN
Birmingham

Sir: Pelham Barton (letter, 22 January) asks if anyone can explain why other than a completely elected replacement for the House of Lords is even an option. I'll try.

A completely elected replacement would be another House of Commons. It is enough that we have one of those already. And what would it do? Act in the name of the electorate to limit the will of the electorate?

Such a house would be full of politicians, for goodness' sake. The breadth of experience, wisdom and perspective would be diminished dramatically. We will have more elections, more politics and it will cost more.

DAVID CHANDLER
Bromley, Kent

Sir: Pelham Barton asks whether there is any case for a second chamber which is not directly elected. Well, the argument is that the house should continue to have some independent members who, vote on the merits of legislation



Staten Island Ferry No 2: A ferry passes the Statue of Liberty at sunset

Edward Webb

rather than on party lines. But do they? When I was chief lobbyist for the GLC during its campaign against abolition we noticed that nearly a third of the cross-bench peers voted consistently with the Tory government (four of them were said to be in receipt of the Conservative whip) and almost a third voted with the opposition. The rest appeared to cast their votes in a genuinely independent way.

I suggest to Lord Wakeham that, at the first meeting of his Royal Commission, a university is commissioned to produce a research study showing how the "independent" peers voted on major issues during the last 10 years. Were they really independent? If not, the case for nominated cross-bench members collapses.

Provided the powers of the new second chamber are laid down in statute and not left to conventions and time-honoured practices, there is no need for the Commons to feel threatened by a directly elected Senate. Only the "great and the good" hoping to be nominated for a place in this exclusive club will be disappointed. Well, tough.

ROLAND FREEMAN
Salisbury

Sir: The Government has announced that an Appointments Commission will create "people's peers". We should finally get a more representative input into the British political system. But yet again we still have no input from youth.

Was it not Tony Blair who said he wanted a "young country"? Will we ever see a broader age range in the Lords, including significantly younger peers, who understand youth's problems?

The Bishops have their say in the Lords and there are many different specialists among the cross-benchers, so when is the New Labour government going to do something for the future people of this country, rather than the past?

OLLINE COCHRAN
Brentwood, Essex

Sir: On the radio the other day I heard an announcer rebuked for addressing a knight as "Mister" – "Sir Terence, if you please!" came the huffy correction; and I am sorry to say that the broadcaster sounded genuinely apologetic.

My reflections are further prompted by Andreas Whittam Smith's column (25 June) about the title "Lord": he should widen his target to include all honorary titles. The media could help there. What a healthy innovation it would be if a newspaper announced that it would not in future use such titles. It would report that Mr Bloggs had been ennobled but continue to refer to him as Mr: the same with knights. Others would follow the example. And social practice in due course be reshaped, so that such honours would not have their current divisive effect.

NEVILLE MAXWELL
Oxford

Safely to school

Sir: I write in the light of recent events to call on all parents and teachers to consider carefully how they are introducing the children in

their care to the concept and skills of personal safety.

Our work as the national charity for personal safety has taught us that if young people are taught how to instinctively avoid dangerous situations, they are much more likely to avoid being victims.

As far as travelling to school is concerned we recommend that parents contact other parents and the school to discuss strategies for ensuring that children have arrived at school and that their journey to school is safe. It is hard to let children do things on their own, but if they are not allowed out alone they will never learn to be safe.

Parents should help children plan routes to school, taking note of phone booths and public places to go for help. They should talk through strategies for recognising and coping with potential danger and provide children with a charge card for making a telephone call.

This is another of those conversations that parents should not avoid having with their children.

DIANA LAMPLUGH
Director

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust

London SW14

IN BRIEF

product of some rational consultation and thought process. This is in contrast to the lottery faced by infertile couples, many of whom have little choice but to pay thousands of pounds for treatment because they live in the "wrong" part of the country.

MARGARET LYNE
Perth

Sir: Professor Kirkwood ("Hungry for a longer life?", 22 January) refers too casually to the danger of anorexia.

According to a recent article in the US journal *Science* (29 May 1998) this disease "is among the most disabling and lethal of psychiatric disorders" with a mortality rate of approximately 5 per cent of patients per decade of follow-up.

ANDREW COULSON

Musselburgh, East Lothian

Victims of Taliban

Sir: We were astonished at Peter Popham's suggestion that the right of women to healthcare, education and employment in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan is an inappropriate "Western assumption" on the part of aid agencies ("How the children of Kabul are sacrificed to sexual politics of the West", 16 January).

We left Kabul not because the accommodation imposed on us by the authorities was not comfortable enough, as Popham suggests.

The Taliban authorities had imposed such severe restrictions on medical work that it had become impossible to help the most vulnerable people, namely women and children. The authorities had previously banned women from general hospitals, and outlawed the training and employment of female medical staff, the only health workers allowed to treat women – this in a country with one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world.

Medical ethics demand that all

patients be treated equally regardless of their gender. We will return to the Afghan capital when the authorities allow us to resume our work in a principled way.

However, we do not agree with the blanket funding ban currently imposed by the British government and the European Union on Afghanistan. The situation in the Afghan provinces is very different from Kabul and aid agencies are able to provide assistance in a fair and principled way in many areas. Such life-saving work should be continued and supported.

ANNE-MARIE HUBY
Executive Director
Médecins Sans Frontières (UK)
London EC1

Mandy's election

Sir: Roy Hattersley was mistaken in his review of *Mandy* (23 January) concerning Peter Mandelson's appointment as the Labour Party director of communications.

The National Executive was heavily factionalised in 1985 and on the day (24 September) there were 23 votes round the table. At the end of the interviewing procedure 12 votes on the right were lined up behind Peter and 12 votes were behind the left candidate.

During the interviews Neil

Kinnock prevailed upon myself and another member of the left faction to switch our votes to Peter, which, after much soul-searching, and to help Neil build the team he wanted, we both eventually did.

Peter was therefore elected by 14 votes to 10.

After the interviews I telephoned the unsuccessful left candidate to apologise for the way I had voted.

She was gracious in defeat and has said on many occasions since that we appointed the best person to the job. The left faction was much less forgiving and we received the usual ritual denunciation. The rest is history.

TOM SAWYER

London SE6

Young soldiers

Sir: Thank you for the informative article "Ban on soldiers under 16 resisted by Britain and US" (18 January). The problem is just the age at which soldiers are recruited, or even the young age at which they are sent into battle, but the uniquely British system which we term the "five year trap".

The MOD has said that "young servicemen... could leave at any time during their basic training". However, basic training, for those who join before 18 years, means a period of only five months, from the second to the sixth month of service.

Six months after signing a document which most of them do not understand, the 16-year-old soldiers are committed to full-time service at least until the age of 21 plus three months, and to Reserve obligation until the age of 40.

In 1996 Dr John Reid promised a delegation of which I was a member that, when Labour was elected and he became Minister in the Armed Forces, the recruitment contracts for under-18s would be reformed. He suggested keeping the present five-month recruits' right of discharge but giving an additional one-off chance to leave at the age of 18, with a financial bonus for those who remained.

Not only has this promise not been kept but the Government has intensified a recruitment campaign targeted at younger teenagers.

Gwyn GWYN TOPHER
At Ease voluntary counsellor
London E1

Unknown killers

Sir: Mr Young ("Killers at large", letter, 18 January) seems to believe that psychiatrists have supernatural powers to predict human behaviour and consequently he saddles them with a responsibility they cannot sustain. His belief is a delusion common among the public.

In truth, although psychiatrists come into contact with many potentially dangerous people, they are unable to predict whether or when a given person will commit an act of violence.

One known important factor which increases the likelihood of criminal behaviour, including apparently irrational violence, is the use of illegal drugs. However, it is still impossible for a psychiatrist, or anyone else, including close relatives, to predict when a person will take a drug and in what circumstances the drug will induce a state of inclination towards violence.

Dr ANDREW WILSKI
Consultant Psychiatrist and Medical Director
Pembury Hospital, Mental Health Services
Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Long night train

Sir: I wonder if Roger Hill will receive compensation when he has posted his claim form to SNCF (letter, 23 January).

I travelled from Zurich to Paris in September 1997. The train came to a standstill somewhere in mid-France in the early hours of the morning and was more than three hours late arriving in Paris. There was no refreshment car as it was an overnight train due in around 5am, so the passengers were hungry and thirsty by the time we arrived.

No explanation was given and although compensation forms were handed out when we left the train there was no suggestion of an apology.

I duly posted my form and am still waiting for my compensation.

CATRIONA WHEELER
Lincoln

Top banana

Sir: In her letter (22 January) on the banana dispute, Glens Kinnock asks: "If the worst happens and the EU fails, what will Bill Clinton do?" Surely recent history shows the answer – he'll authorise the bombing of Brussels.

JOHN HAWGOOD

Durham

A beginner's guide to the art of tax avoidance

Yes, it's panic time for those of you who have not yet submitted your tax forms! The end of January is the deadline, after which the Inland Revenue will come knocking on your door in the middle of the night, asking for money and uttering hideous cackling laughter. (See my leaflet "Can I Claim Self-Defence After Shooting a Tax Official in My Own Home?", £2 + p & p.)

There is still time, however, to avoid this fate, and for those of you who want to get their forms in on time but are finding it a nightmare to fill them in, I am conducting a tax surgery today to clear up the most common problems.

I WONDER if you can help me. I have recently been involved in the building of a massive dome in

Greenwich for the celebration of the millennium. To enable this to be financed, I arranged for a huge loan to be made to me which I didn't really get around to mentioning to anyone else. I have now been removed from being in charge of the building of the dome, which means that when the loan comes to light in my absence, it is going to cause a massive scandal, huge national embarrassment, soap general election and so on. Is there a way in which I could transfer the details of this loan outside the country now, so as to avoid them becoming public later?

Yes. Send for my leaflet "20 Different Ways in which Cabinet Ministers Can Get Loans Registered in the Cayman Islands to Avoid Undue Publicity and Notoriety" (£200 + p & p.)



MILES KINGTON

'I wonder if you can help me. I have recently been involved in the building of a massive dome...' to mention it the next time you are involved in a case in front of the Law Lords.'

I AM the president of a committee which helps to choose the sites for the Olympic Games. Recently I have been shocked to discover that the members of my committee have been taking bribes to ensure that certain cities got the vote for the Winter Olympic Games, not to mention the summer ones... The answer is quite clear. As president, you should have been aware of this. You must now resign.'

No, no, that is not the question. The question is this. If the committee members were discovered to have passed on some of their ill-gotten gains to me, would I be liable to tax on it? Are bribes in fact taxable? Or being undercover in the first place, and therefore outside the law, are they also exempt from legal things such as taxes? This is purely hypothetical, you understand.

If I were you, I would send up for my leaflet "Why the Presidents of Some International Organisations Should Go Out and Throw Themselves from the Top of the Nearest Building at the First Opportunity, in a Purely Hypothetical Sort of Way, Of Course" (£2.50 + p & p.).

I HAVE recently resigned as the leader of a major political party in Britain, and have been deluged with offers to write my memoirs. Political memoirs are always deadly dull exercises in evasiveness and I am loath to add to their number, but is there any tax incentive in not writing your autobiography? No, but you will make more friends than any other living politician if I see. But do you have a question?

NO, I just wanted to stress that all this bombing costs money, and that means taxes, and that means all of you getting your tax returns in as soon as possible. Thank you.

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Not only has this promise not
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targeted at younger teenagers.

PANDORA

FIRST GORDON Brown managed to lose Charlie Whelan, but now it's his girlfriend, Sarah Macauley, whose has mislaid a dear friend: her cat, Felix. Many hoped that the tom would follow in Humphrey's paw prints and become the new Downing Street cat. Unfortunately, he has been missing for the past two weeks. Macauley has used her extensive PR experience in an effort to find Felix. Posters of the four-year-old black and white tom cat have been posted around the South London area where she lives. According to friends, Felix bears a striking resemblance to the frowny Chancellor. Sarah has transformed Felix into a friendly, confident, outgoing creature and friends speculated about the "Felix factor" which seemed to be working on Mr Brown. Cats have always been associated with superstition. Could this be an omen?

FRANK JOKLIK, president of Salt Lake City's scandal-ridden bid for the 2002 Winter Olympics, is a British Honorary Consul. Pandora has learnt that Joklik, who resigned amidst (denied) allegations of corruption earlier this month, receives an "honorarium" (paid expenses) from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for his services and has done so since 1994. The allegations against him – that he helped bribe International Olympic Committee officials to win Salt Lake City's Olympic bid – have been investigated by the British Consulate General in Los Angeles, and he is due to make a report shortly. A call to the boys at the FO revealed they were "taking these allegations seriously, but we have not seen any evidence to support them".

PANDORA IS always happy to lend a helping hand to a desperate man, which is why she is launching a campaign to allow the adorable Piers Morgan, editor of *The Mirror*, to gain membership to the Groucho Club. Morgan was persuaded to apply for membership to the media hang-out by his uncle. His membership was turned down. His new year was blighted by what Piers called a "fabulous" letter, which started off saying that the membership was full and then proceeded to say that even if it wasn't full, the club would not accept Mr Morgan. A severely

humiliated and distraught Morgan admitted to Pandora: "I am slightly bemused that I don't seem to have the right criteria to join a media club. I'm a desperate man. I need to be there drinking with the media luvvies. Please, Pandora, do something to help me." While the Groucho's membership secretary suggests that he reapply, Pandora would be only too delighted to share a vodka fizz with the cheerful chap and welcomes him as her guest whenever he chooses.

MEANWHILE, MIRROR columnist Tony Parsons has been the unintentional butt of an "in-joke" this week. Sunday's episode of the BBC series *The Lakes* shows two characters fast asleep in front of their TV while one of Parsons' appearances on the *Lake Review* programme (also BBC) plays out. *The Lakes* was created by Jimmy McGovern, whose credits include *Hillsborough*, a TV drama telling the story of the 1989 football tragedy and much praised by Parsons. When Pandora spoke to Parsons about the "tribute" paid to him by *The Lakes*, he had pity rather than praise: "Jimmy McGovern has turned into a sad old hag."

ACTRESS JULIA Sawalha (pictured), known for her role as the dowdy daughter Saffy in *Ab Fab*, has been telling of the spirituality of her own home life. Currently doing the rounds with *The Memory of Water* in the West End, Sawalha says: "My dad (Jordanian actor, Nadiim Sawalha) is a natural philosopher and my guru. I went to see the Dalai Lama once and I was surprised at the number of things he said which my dad had already told us at the kitchen sink." Obviously, the kitchen sink is the place to be for enlightenment.

After all, it's where to find the Fairy, the Flash and the mug.

WHILE ORANGE juice is not really Pandora's style, she was rather taken aback in the much hyped "Titanic bar" in London when her puritan friend ordered the classic vitamin drink only to be told that there was none. "We have orange juice as a mixer but we don't serve it on its own," explained a barman. This glitch was fixed by ordering a sensible vodka and orange and asking the barman to hold the vodka. The things a girl has to do for a simple drink these days.

What's so special about creating life?



ANDREW BROWN

The massacres in Kosovo threaten our dignity more than anything brewed in Dr Venter's test tubes

can't copy itself except when it is part of a cell and surrounded by the right proteins, which come into contact with it in the right order. People talk in shorthand of DNA replicating itself, but this is no more true than saying that my word processing program can print without being installed in a properly equipped computer.

Dr Venter thinks he has designed a string of DNA containing 300 genes which can specify a cell that will build more of the same string of DNA. If it works, this cell will be a form of life that has almost certainly never existed before. Since he

has an excellent track record in the manipulation of DNA, people are saying that, if anyone can do it, he can. And even if he fails, it is almost certain to be done by someone within the next 10 years. The difficulty is that this new form of life needs old life as its raw material. DNA is not enough. It can't copy itself. There must also be a cell which can use the DNA to make more of the same.

What Dr Venter seems to be planning is to use a blender, rather than a bathtub: instead of dropping his strands of 300 genes into a chemical soup, he is going to drop them into chopped up cells of *Mycoplasma genitalia*, the micro-organism from which they were originally derived. This is similar to the way in which Dolly the sheep was made.

It's not quite reproducing the way in which life must have started on earth, because on the primitive earth there were no cells, and probably no DNA either. That whole mechanism must have evolved from simpler chemical precursors. But what he proposes to do is going a long way back towards the beginning of life. Dr Venter will take two sets of chemicals that are indubitably dead and, by mixing them, produce an organism that is alive (even if the life of a bacterium lacks interest and excitement).

That doesn't make him Dr Frankenstein. There's a huge leap to be made from creating life to designing it; and even if the experiment works, no one knows in detail why these 300 genes should be the ones necessary to create a life form. Dr Venter himself says that he only knows what 200 of them do. The other 100 seem necessary to a functioning cell, but he doesn't know why.

Human beings are, of course, infinitely more complex. We have between 70,000 and 80,000 genes, though it will take decades of work to find out how many there are exactly and what functions they perform. Since we already have a perfectly good and pleasurable way of creating human beings without any scientific apparatus at all, our interest in human genetics lies in designing rather than creating, and for most interesting purposes that will require a lot more knowledge than is in sight today.

Yet the road ahead is clear in principle. There is no longer anything special about life that science can detect. The difficulty that these discoveries raise is that we want science to reinforce our moral intuitions, and it's not often very good at the job. It is beginning to look as if the sanctity of life must be a religious illusion. But this is not necessarily the case.

An alternative to the idea of morality as a religious illusion is that it is just an evolutionary illusion – evolved to keep our ancestors alive by paying respectful attention to things large enough to eat us. Consequently, our intuitive idea of "life" is something big enough to see, but this intuition could hardly be more wrong. Most of life, through most of history, has always been single-celled; and it's almost as difficult for a human being fully to imagine this as it would be for a bacterium to conceive of the sanctity of human life.

But there is an alternative to both these rather ghastly perspectives. After all, we can't reasonably expect the universe to take any notice of human beings, even if it were the sort of thing that could take notice. Life is special only to other living things, and human life is special to human beings.

We do not love, or even hate, our fellow men for their chemical constituents. We love them because they're lovable, and hate them because they're the wrong sort of human. Serbs, Muslims or whatever: The massacres in Kosovo are a much greater threat to human dignity than anything brewed in Dr Venter's test tubes.

Andrew Brown's book "The Dorothy Wars" will be published by Simon & Schuster in March.

HAMISH MCRAE

The most serious ch... against the IOC is one of corruption – is one of incompe...

IT IS A REMARKABLE CONTRAST phrase "Olympic Games" c... great clout as a global brand boasting human achievement excellence. Yet a far proportion of the people who run them have been revealed to be crooks, a fair proportion of the participants have been revealed to be dr...

Something is up.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED IS THE SAME STORY THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IN OTHER SPORTS, EXCEPT THAT IT SEEMS TO BE ENORMOUSLY OLYMPIC. The people who run them have been revealed to be crooks, a fair proportion of the participants have been revealed to be dr...

BY BEING TRANSFORMED IN THE BRANCH OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY. However, the ethical auditing standards under which most businesses have been to operate over the years are gradually being extended to s...

THE BUSINESS ASPECTS OF SPORT ARE TOO NEW TO HAVE ACQUIRED STANDARD BUSINESS DISCIPLINE.

COMPANY DIRECTORS WHO AC...

Bribes and are taught to j... though may not for as long as should. Members of the International Olympic Committee...

CAN'T EVEN SEE WHAT IS WRONG IN TRAVERSING THE ODD BROWN ENV...

FOR THOSE OF US WHOSE P... EXPERIENCE OF SPORT HAS BEEN G... SKIPPING ON HOLIDAY OR BRIEFLY AND SUCCESSFULLY, CLUB RUGBY IS THE SPORT THAT SHOULD BE A BUSINESS ANY OTHER IS STILL A BIT JARRING. I...

ANY OTHER? WELL, YES – ALL BUSINESSES ARE DIFFERENT AND THE GAP...

TWICE, SAY FORMULA ONE AND IN THE BIG HOLLYWOOD STARS, IS FAR NARROWER THAN THAT BETWEEN MICROSOFT AND ITS NEIGHBOUR, SEATTLE BOEING. THE OTHER TWO ARE A PRODUCT YOU SIT AND WATCH ENTERTAINMENT, WHILE THE OTHER TWO ARE...

THE OTHER TWO ARE QUITE DIFFERENT.

THE OLYMPICS IS PARTICULARLY...

INTERESTING IN BUSINESS TERMS...

CAUSE IT IS ONE OF THE BIG THREE GLOBAL TV SPORTS EVENTS. IT COMMANDS...

LARGEST SINGLE TELEVISION AUDIENCE...

A SPORTS EVENT, LARGER EVEN THAN THE WORLD CUP. HOWEVER SINCE...

OLYMPICS AND THE WORLD CUP TAKE PLACE ONLY EVERY FOUR YEARS, THE...

TEST TELEVISION AUDIENCE CALCULATED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS IS THAT...

FORMULA ONE.

"IF ANYTHING WAS WORTH BANKING YOURSELF FOR, TULIPS WERE," WRITES ANNA PAVORD. SHE WILL NOT HAVE LOVED DODDY ON THIS SIX-YEAR VENTURE, WHICH HAS ALREADY ATTRACTED MORE COUPLES THAN MOST GARDENING BOOKS, WELL AS SERIALISATION ON RADIO 4. HOWEVER, *THE TULIP* IS NOT A GARDENING MONOGRAPH. BUT IT IS DEFINITELY A WORK OF GREAT SCHOLARSHIP, TRACING THE HISTORY OF THE PLANT WITH A CAREFUL PAST.

BEFORE YOU EMBARK ON *THE TULIP*, I SUGGEST YOU FIND A COMFORTABLE ARMCHAIR AND PUT A SOFT CUSHION ON YOUR LAP, OR YOUR ARMS, WHILE BEFORE YOUR CURIOSITY.

ON THE WEBSITE,

ONLY A FEW...

SHE DIVES...

EACH...

THOUGH...

ONLY A FEW...

SHE FORE...

DEPARTS...

BY NOT BE...

BEHIND IT...

SHES WILL...

OR HUNTS...

ALL THE...

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THAT CONTAINS...

AND MORE, OF HER...

DIES, IT IS...

COLLECTED POEMS 194

TO THE many difficulties attending the creative life may now be added a new peril. Outside the study, downstairs preparing lunch, or breezing his way towards you for a weekend stay, may be a spouse or a lover or a friend, taking notes. When, at some distant point in the future, something goes wrong – a relationship goes belly-up, a friendship turns sour, a terrible change occurs in your life – the notes could become a book and your loathsome, undignified, domestic self will be revealed to the world. One false move, and the stalkers in your intimate life will be off to the nearest literary agent.

Betrayal is in the air, and, in a sense, there's nothing new about that. For years, part of the deal of being a celebrity was that where there was an ex, there would soon be an exposé. In this age of public intimacy, no one is particularly surprised when the abandoned wife of an eminent politician or the sister of a famous cellist decides to share their pain with a bracing course of hardback therapy.

Nowhere has the contagion of memoirs caused more anxiety, confusion and hypocrisy than in the literary world. In the latest edition of the *New York Review of Books*, John Updike has written an edgy, heartfelt critique of what he calls "the Judas biography", listing recently published books from the new entrées: Philip Roth's ex-wife, Claire Bloom; J.D. Salinger's ex-lover, Joyce Maynard; and VS Naipaul's ex-friend, Paul Theroux.

Over in *The Spectator*, Rafael Garcia-Navarro, a friend of Bloom's, deconstructed Roth's latest novel *I Married a Communist*, earnestly identifying real events and people

deployed in the fiction, complaining that Roth had vampirically usurped the stories of those once close to him. Another confessional memoir, representing a gentler form of vampirism, has, meantime, been garlanded with praise.

The rise of the Judas biography was somehow inevitable. Each of these writers was reacting to two powerful cultural impulses of the moment: the interest in writers' lives, as evidenced in the boom in literary biographies, and the vogue for the confessional memoir. There's a public hunger for tales of hurt and damage, and if the villain of the piece happens to be previously revered and haughty public figure, so much the better.

Similarly misrepresented, Maynard's intriguing, if slight memoir, *At Home in the World*, has been an excuse for more trials of moral outrage directed at both the book's subject (*Perverse Bonkers!*), and its author (Gore Vidal).

The most serious effect of these memoirs is, of course, not on the reputations of their subjects as good-standing citizens – which authors are? – but on readings of their work. A retroactive pall is likely to be cast over Naipaul's fiction by the knowledge that he was so personally bigoted and unpleasant. Even the sublime *The Catcher in the Rye* is likely to be tarnished by an aware-

ness of Salinger's non-literary interests in teenage girls. However determinedly we may dismiss the reduction of *I Married a Communist* to an agglomeration of true incidents, vengefully deployed, any reading of it as fiction is fatally undermined by a base curiosity as to whether Claire Bloom really did this, or Gore Vidal did that.

But if that is the true betrayal, what do we make of the one confessional memoir to have been universally acclaimed, John Bayley's *Iris*? Clearly a good and loving man, Bayley describes in clear-eyed, moving terms the descent of Iris Murdoch, his wife and one of our great novelists, into a state of clinging, like-like dementia. It is obviously a sincere work but – by the criteria against which the other memoirs have been judged – does it intrude unjustifiably into a writer's private life?

Will it cast a shadow over readings of that writer's work? Iris could surely be said to be the greater betrayal than anything written by an ex-wife, lover or friend.

Yet not one commentator has questioned the wisdom of publication. The book has been extravagantly praised as one of the great love stories of the century, and has been short-listed for literary prizes.

It is as if authors are now judged on their motives and behaviour; as if critics are careful to align themselves with all that is good and caring in the world, enacting a literary version of the Diana effect.

Perhaps none of it, neither moral outrage nor exaggerated praise, will matter too much. Briefly, these books will catch the headlines and appeal to those who distrust the power of good novelists to shape and use everyday experience to tell a greater truth than any memoir. But in the end it will be the works, not the flawed, blundering lives, that produced them, which will live on.

It is unbelievable punishment, even though the framers didn't quite see it that way. Again, they said – and it bears repeating over and over again – they said that they wanted to protect the people. But I can tell you this: the punishment of removing Bill Clinton from office would pale compared to the punishment he has already inflicted on himself. There is a feeling in this country that somehow or another Bill Clinton has gotten away with something. Mr Leader, I can tell you, he hasn't gotten away with anything.

Colleagues, this is easily the most important vote you will ever cast. If you have difficulty because of an intense dislike of the President – and that is understandable – rise above it. He is not the issue. He will be gone. You won't. So don't leave a precedent from which we may never recover and almost surely will regret. If you vote to acquit, Mr Leader, you know exactly what is going to happen.

You are going to start dealing with Medicare, Social Security, tax cuts, and all those things which the people of this country have a non-negotiable demand that you do. If you vote to acquit, you go immediately to the people's agenda. But if you vote to convict, you can't be sure what is going to happen. James G Blaine was a member of the Senate when Andrew Johnson was tried in 1868, and 20 years later he recanted. He said, "I made a bad mistake."

As I reflect back on it, all I can think about is that having convicted Andrew Johnson would have caused much more chaos and confusion in this country than Andrew Johnson could ever conceivably have created.

And so it is with William Jefferson Clinton.

If you vote to convict, in my opinion you are going to be creating more havoc than he could ever possibly create. After all, he has only got two years left.

So don't, for God's sake, heighten the people's alienation, which is at an all-time high, toward their Government. The people have a right, and they are calling on you to rise above politics, rise above partisanship. They are calling on you to do your solemn duty, and I pray you will. Thank you, Mr Chief Justice.

Our poems this week in "Collected Poems 194"

Enough of these betrayals by the friends of great writers



Actress Claire Bloom with her ex-husband Philip Roth

This is a time to rise above politics



PODIUM

DALE BUMPERS
The Lead Manager
concludes the
defence case for
President Clinton
in the US Senate

WE ARE here today because the President suffered a terrible moral lapse of marital infidelity, not a breach of the public trust, not a crime against society, the two things Hamilton talked about in *Federalist Paper No 65* – I recommend it to you before you vote – but it was a breach of his marriage vows. It was a breach of his family trust. It is a sex scandal.

H.L. Mencken one time said, "When you hear somebody say, 'This is not about money,' it's about sex. You pick your own adjective to

Let's privatise the Olympics



HAMISH MCRAE

The most serious charge against the IOC is not one of corruption – it is one of incompetence

IT IS a remarkable contrast. The phrase "Olympic Games" carries great clout as a global brand symbolising human achievement and excellence. Yet a fair proportion of the people who run them have been revealed to be crooks, while a fair proportion of the participants have been revealed to be druggies. Something up.

What has happened is much the same story that has taken place in other sports, except that the scale seems to be, er, more Olympian. All sports are in the process of transforming themselves from co-operative or charitable organisations into businesses. All sport is gradually being transformed into a branch of the entertainment industry. However, the ethical and auditing standards under which most businesses have been forced to operate over the years are only gradually being extended to sport.

The business aspects of sport are too new to have acquired the standard business disciplines. Company directors who accept bribes and are caught go to jail – though maybe not for as long as they should. Members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) can't even see what is wrong with trousering the odd brown envelope.

For those of us whose main reference of sport has been going skiving on holiday or (briefly and unsuccessfully) club rugby, the idea that sport should be a business like any other is still a bit jarring. Like any other? Well, yes – all businesses are different and the gap between, say, Formula One and one of the big Hollywood studios feels narrower than that between Microsoft and its neighbour in Seattle, Boeing. The first two create a product you sit and watch as entertainment, while the output of the other two is quite different.

The Olympics is particularly interesting in business terms because it is one of the big three global TV sports events. It commands the largest single television audience for a sports event, larger even than football's World Cup. However since the Olympics and the World Cup take place only every four years, the latest television audience calculated on an annual basis is that of Formula One.



The respected British hurdler Jon Ridgeon at the centennial Olympiad in Atlanta, Georgia in 1996

Mike Powell/Allsport

Not only is the audience big; it is broad. Formula One and the World Cup are great at providing advertisers with large numbers of relatively high-spending young men, always a difficult group to reach.

They do not, however, offer much access to Americans, because neither is established in the States. Incidentally, the position of Britain as home of the world's most valuable sports club, Manchester United, and also of Formula One, gives us a comparative advantage in this branch of the market which we ought to be able to exploit further.

The Olympics, on the other hand, is global, giving access not just to the US but also, crucially, to China. If you are a global business, like Visa, then you are prepared to pay an enormous amount to flood the event with your symbols. You could afford to piece together a global campaign which gave you similar exposure, but with the Olympics you are it with one shot.

So there is a lot of money swishing around. It is not enormous by conventional commercial standards. It is hard to put a value on the Olympic brand, partly because it has not been developed commercially and partly because it is not clear quite what the IOC would own

were it reconstituted as a commercial entity.

The closest comparison would be Formula One, which is owned by Bernie Ecclestone. When it looked as though Formula One would be floated there was talk of it being worth about £2 to £3 billion. I would expect the Olympics to be bigger, largely because there must be ways in which it could be developed from a four-yearly event into something that produced subsidiary products annually. Even if it were worth £3 billion that would make it about the same size as a successful chain store: bigger than Next but smaller than Dixons, a decent size, but by comparison to the power of the global brand, not enormous.

The Olympic committee, however, is not the only beneficiary of a global brand name. A lot of value goes to the host cities, assuming that they organise themselves on the Los Angeles or Atlanta models, where they took existing facilities and built ones that could be used afterwards. The alternative grand schemes as in Barcelona and, most disastrously, Montreal – have piled debts on the poor taxpayers for a generation. The Australians reckon that next year's Sydney Olympics will be worth about £400 million.

The most certain way of damaging a sports brand is to have it associated with drugs. Most sensible athletes know this. Those tainted by drug accusations – even those not actually caught – have found that sponsorship money dries up. Not all athletes are sensible. That is understandable. What is incomprehensible is that the IOC has not realised the potential damage to the one thing it controls, the Olympic brand, from not adopting an aggressive anti-drug stance.

It should, for example, retrospectively present medals to all those athletes cheated out of them by people subsequently shown to have been drug users. And the drug users should be stripped of their medals and the medal tables reconstructed. Were this to have been done years ago, a number of athletes would not have had their health ruined and – commercial point – the value of the television contract for the Olympics would be appreciably higher.

That leads to the second thing that owners of brand assets must do: add value. Take Coca-Cola. It is not a particularly marvellous product; in most blind tests people seem to prefer Pepsi. But despite the odd hiccup (most famously when Coca-Cola changed the formula) it has been wonderfully creative at developing the brand.

The Olympics are a wonderful brand, but the organisers have not taken it and developed it. They might like to look at Manchester United, which is almost certainly the most successful club in the world at building a business that has geared up the basic product into an international business.

The tragedy of international athletics is that this has not happened. A driven, competent, professional and, above all, clean IOC could do an enormous amount to raise the quality of life of humankind. No, I don't mean a global campaign to get us to take more exercise. I mean using the money, the big money, that could be available to encourage athletically talented people everywhere in the world to develop themselves through sport.

All that is needed are the normal commercial and ethical standards that any decent-sized multinational should command. The present structure is clearly useless. This is not just a people problem, though it is certainly that. It is a structural problem, too. Privatise the IOC, put in professional management and have the shares owned by a trust dedicated to the Olympic ideal... not?

RIGHT OF REPLY

JONATHAN REGGLER



A member of the British Medical Association's general practitioner committee responds to a leader on Viagra

A LEADER in *The Independent* of 23 January assumes that the British Medical Association (BMA) sees the conflict with the Government over Viagra as an issue of clinical freedom and uses this as an opportunity to do a bit of doctor bashing. It was particularly galling to be told that the BMA should be engaged in persuasive arguments "that National Health Service spending as a whole is too low". The BMA has been saying this for years and has published endless figures to prove it. Why successive governments have not found the arguments persuasive is a question that begs an answer.

The BMA's general practitioner committee (of which I am a member) rejected the guidelines of Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, and advised GPs to prescribe Viagra to those in need for two reasons. Firstly, NHS regulations ruling GPs' lives explicitly require us to prescribe those drugs our patients need. Only certain drugs are banned, and Viagra is not yet one of them. Minor infringements of these regulations can lead to severe punishments, but Mr Dobson wants us to ignore the regulations when it suits him.

Secondly, whilst most GPs accept that rationing in the NHS is necessary, it should be fair and logical. Mr Dobson had two ethically acceptable choices: Viagra for all of those in need or Viagra for no one. To give Viagra on the NHS only to those made impotent by a narrow range of causes and to deny it to all other impotent men is indeed, to use the words of the BMA, "cruel and unethical".

On the scent of flower power



TUESDAY BOOK

THE TULIP
BY ANNA PAVORD, BLOOMSBURY, £30

is a wonderful illustration on virtually every other page, so it takes until page 279 before you get to the invaluable index of varieties. Pavord writes lyrically about each species, from *Tulipa acuminata*, "with its crazy, very tall, thin bud opening to creamy flowers sometimes streaked and flecked with red", to *T. zenaidae*.

with yellow flowers that are elegantly waisted, the top third of the flower flinging outwards". She goes on to describe, in a way any sports writer would envy, the cultivars – tulips bred for show and classified into various divisions, like football stars. Starting with 'Abu Hasssan', which is a "dark mahogany-red with an edge of gold around the top half of the petals", she continues to 'Zwemburg', which is "a pure white with plum-coloured stamens".

Before Pavord tantalises us with the range of tulips available today, she takes the reader through the plant's origins, moving from its mountain habitats in the East to its pride of place in the sultan's palaces. She explains how the name came about through a wonderful misunderstanding. The Flemish ambassador to the court of Suleyman the Magnificent, in 16th century Constantinople, claimed the honour of introducing the tulip to Europe. He also managed to confuse his interpreter's description of the flower, which looks like a turban ("tulband" in Turkish), with the name of the flower itself, which the Turks called "lale".

The plot thickens as we follow the fame and fortune of the tulip through northern Europe to Britain. Pavord speculates that, if England had not been busy with a civil war in the mid-17th century, we, too, might have been caught up in the financial speculation that spread through Holland. There bulbs were traded in much the same way as the stock market deals in commodities, fuelled by what would be

seen today as clever marketing. It takes up to seven years for tulip seed to mature into a bulb of flowering size. Bulbs were often sold as they lay buried in the ground, their potential unknown. Yet at the height of this trading, a single tulip might fetch as much as an Amsterdam town house.

Pristine varieties were given elaborate names, such as the famous 'Semper Augustus', while the most handsome flowers were painted by the greatest Dutch artists as if they had been society hostesses. This celebrity status added to the mystique of the tulip, as did its unfathomable secret: why certain plants should "break" and then produce such exciting colour combinations. Not until 1928 was it discovered that these colour breaks were caused by a virus that weakened the plants. However, even after the financial crash that marked the end of tulip mania, the Dutch refused to give up on tulips. The rich alluvial soil around Haarlem was soon given over to increased production, which continues to this day.

In 18th century Britain and Ireland, the tulip was no longer the plaything of the rich but a plant that could be enjoyed by anyone who wished to join their local floral society. These societies were devoted to the culture of one plant and their meetings took place in inns. There were magazines that fed the florist's interest, and a great rivalry developed between the north and south of Britain over the perfect form of the florist's tulip. Interestingly, the demise of the floral societies coincided with football's first FA Cup final, played in 1872. Today, only the Wakefield and the North of England Tulip Society remains.

While tulips seemed to be going out of favour in early 20th century Britain, the Dutch seized the moment by launching a new breed called Darwins, named with the permission of Charles

Darwin's son. They started a new tulip invasion, and the Dutch now export at least 2 billion tulips a year.

Even though her book covers more ground than one might consider possible, Pavord still seems like a detective who is not quite sure if she has solved all the tulip's mysteries. If she has not got the tulip out of her system, she has certainly succeeded in spreading her passion for the plant.

ROB ATKINS

The reviewer is the editor of *Gardens Illustrated*



Tulips from the 'Florilegium' of Pieter van Kouwenhoorn, made in the first half of the 17th century

TUESDAY POEM

CAT, AGING
BY MICHAEL HAMBURGER

Her years measure mine.
So finely set in her ways.
She divines, she sniffs out
Every change in the house,
In the weather, and marks it for me
Though with a flick of her ear
Only, a twitch of her tail.
She foretells convulsions.
Departure, thunderstorm,
By not being there – hiding
Behind the heater. At times
She will play yet, kittenish,
Or hunt; but then gathers
All movement, vanity
Into her great stillness
That contains the whole of herself
And more, of her kind. When she stays there,
Dies, it is me she'll prove mortal.

Our poems this week come from Michael Hamburger's 'Collected Poems 1941-1994' (Anvil Press, £12.95)

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Leslie French

DESPITE A remarkably varied career over nearly three-quarters of a century during which he appeared in everything from musical revue and pantomime, through Shakespeare, Milton and Eliot and a final trenchant cameo on television in Dennis Potter's *The Singing Detective* (1986), Leslie French like his fellow vertically-challenged and similarly farouche contemporary Richard Goolden, the perennial Mole of *Toad of Toad Hall*, is fated always to be associated primarily with one particular role.

But then his Ariel, first tackled during an *annus mirabilis* at the Old Vic in a 1930 *Tempest* to John Gielgud's first Prospero, a memorable performance in itself, also received a kind of immortality often denied to much starker actors. The performances of Gielgud and French, the talk of London at the time, inspired Eric Gill's carving of Prospero with his staff towering over Ariel above the entrance to the then brand new Broadcasting House in Portland Place (and *Ariel* remains the title of the BBC house magazine).

All of French's early background and training informed and nourished his Ariel (which he played on numerous occasions during his career) and other memorable performances of Shakespeare's elementals and clowns as well as his equally striking Attendant Spirit in several revivals of Milton's *Comus* at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park, of which he became a mainstay at the height of his career.

He was born in Bromley in 1906. His education in the London School of Choristers developed a natural musical talent and he was incurably stagestruck even before his first appearance as a boy actor in a 1914 Christmas show at the Little Theatre. He joined the touring Ben Green Company as soon as he could leave school (aged 14), basically as a general dogsbody and prompter, and those apprentice years with Green fuelled his passion for Shakespeare.

His singing ability and physical grace (he was a first-rate dancer and a superb skater well into old age) landed him an early West End job in 1923 at the Hippodrome, understudying Bobby Howes as the lovesick hero of Vivian Ellis's musical *Mr Cinders*, taking over the title role and its hit song "Spread a Little Happiness" on the subsequent regional tour.

Then in 1930 he joined the Old Vic at the beginning of a golden period in its history. After a mutually wary interview, Lillian Baylis had grudgingly agreed a salary of £20 a week for John Gielgud, then an emergent West End star, to join the company. With a run of parts including his first attempt at Hamlet, Lear, Prospero and Macbeth (as well as Anthony, Malvolio and Richard II), Gielgud made the Waterloo Road a vital address for classically-minded younger actors and both Ralph Richardson and Laurence Olivier

language, his supple body naked except for a minute loincloth, remarkably daring for the English stage in 1930.

After his Old Vic seasons French appeared under Gielgud's direction in one of the 1930s most tantalising near-misses when Rodney Ackland's *Strange Orchestra* (St Martin's, 1932) received a West End production after a previous try-out at the Embassy Theatre. In this oddity of a mood-piece, set against a louche inter-war Bohemian London in a Bloomsbury flat peopled by lodgers including the lost and the criminal, French played Jimmie, a highly-strung young man intensely involved with fellow-lodger Laura, living just on the edge of things, sensitive and drifting.

Their joint suicide bid galvanised the latter sections of a strange but always absorbing play which despite mainly positive notices (including a perceptive one from James Agate) never caught on at the box-office. The production had not been helped by Mrs Patrick Campbell, long considered unemployable, living up to her reputation as a sinking ship firing on

its rescuers. Gielgud risked casting her as Vera, the feckless but generously-spirited landlady at the centre of the play, but after rehearsing gloriously for a fortnight and promising to deliver a magnificent comeback she floundered out of the production, claiming to understand neither the play nor her characters ("She's not quite a lady, is she? Who are all these people? Does Gladys Cooper know them?"). French, however, emerged extremely well from this succès d'estime.

Shortly afterwards, he worked for the first time at the Open Air Theatre in Regent's Park. His first season was in 1933 and he last worked there in 1958, in somewhat uniquely but extremely successful tandem with the mighty and titan-voiced Robert Atkins, poles apart physically and temperamentally from the slight and urban figure of French. Over those years he often played Ariel and Puck (the latter performance well up to the standard of his Ariel, although his one attempt at Bottom was an experiment that did not come off), as well as a Mercutio of quicksilver wit and

panache, Sylvius, Costard, Pisano, Grumio and a Feste steeped in self-mocking acidity.

Few actors have matched his record in Shakespeare's elementals and zanies; even fewer have managed to invest so many of them with such a potent blend of mischief and otherworldliness. He also directed several years at the Park (*The Taming of the Shrew* and *As You Like It* were especially successful), and his subsequent directional career took him on many occasions to South Africa. He helped establish the open air Maynardville Theatre in Cape Town, where the productions had multi-racial casts and audiences; as well as playing familiar roles such as Puck and Touchstone, he was also unexpectedly successful as Shylock.

Really meaty stage roles were thinner on the ground at home in his later years (sadly he never had an opportunity to play a part in which he would have been perfectly cast – the mysterious Loh in J.M. Barrie's *Dear Brutus*), but he brought lethal silky precision to Dr Warburton in T.S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion* at Guildford (1968) and in Robin

Phillips's starry revival of Christopher Fry's *The Lady's not for Burning* in 1972 he adapted so well so quickly to his first experience of the difficult Chichester hexagonal stage (years of Regent's Park experience coming in useful here) that Richard Chamberlain, Anna Calder-Marshall and even that most larcenous of supporting actors, Harold Innocent, had to look extremely sharp whenever French, in the minor but in his hands tellingly rewarding part of the Chaplain, was on stage.

He had more luck with television work as theatre opportunities dwindled, perhaps most memorably in a BBC Classic Serial of Jane Austen's *Emma* in which his unshowy but slyly unsentimental reading of the solipsistic Mr Woodhouse not only made the valetudinarian old master paradoxically sympathetic, but also effortlessly stole the production away from every other actor in it.

ALAN STRACHAN

Leslie Richard French, actor and director: born Bromley, Kent 23 April 1906; died Ewell, Surrey 21 January 1999.

French as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Mini Theilade, at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park in 1934. He last performed the role of Puck there in 1951

and then again in 1958.

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French as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream</i*

Tony
Bonds

John Pulman

JOHN PULMAN holds a unique place in the history of snooker as a player who held the world title for 11 years.

The legendary Joe Davis, a role model for the young Pulman, won more world championships. However, no other player, including Davis's younger brother Fred, has been in possession of the game's most coveted prize for such an unbroken sequence. And in the modern era where the major prizes swap hands from tournament to tournament, let alone year to year, Pulman's achievement may never be equalled.

Unfortunately for "Pully", the statistics do not tell the full story. That is perhaps why his name doesn't immediately spring to mind when listing past champions in order of greatness. Snooker, despite its current internal wranglings and lack of major sponsorship deals, is in a far healthier state than when Pulman was in his pomp.

A runner-up to Fred Davis in 1955 and 1956, Pulman made it three times lucky when he travelled to Jersey for the 1957 world championship. However, just four players entered the event: Pulman, Kingsley Kennerley, Rex Williams, the present and much maligned chairman of the game's governing body, and the Ulsterman Jackie Rea.

The "final" saw Pulman prevail 39 frames to 34 against Rea to become world champion. Just as his star was in the ascendance, however, the sport's popularity waned to an all-time low. The championship became dormant until 1964 when revived on a challenge basis. When play resumed Pulman defeated Fred Davis 19-16.

He was to retain his title through six more challenges over the next four years including a six-week tour of South Africa with Williams. On one occasion during the trip, annoyed by the low attendance, they flipped a coin rather than play the match.

Unlike the plethora of titles up for grabs in the modern era, Pulman's triumphs were largely confined to his world championship victories. His last successful defence came in 1968 with a 39-34 victory over the Australian "newcomer" Eddie Charlton. In 1969 the championship reverted to a knockout basis and the title holder lost to another emerging professional, Lancastrian John Spencer, in the first round.

The venue was the Weyton Stadium, Bolton, normally used for all-in wrestling. Pulman had lost his grip on the championship for ever. He did make

the final again in 1970, however, and enjoyed one of his finest moments of a 34-year professional career in 1977.

Against the odds, and perhaps due to his decision to stay teetotal from the turn of the year, Pulman reached the semi-finals of the first Embassy-sponsored event held at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield. He led the eventual champion John Spencer 7-3 and later recovered from 15-10 down to trail just 17-16.

Spencer though secured the all-important 34th frame and went on to beat the Canadian Cliff Thorburn in the final. However, it was testimony to his immaculate cueing action - described by Spencer as "one of the best" - that he was able to compete at an age when most sportsmen and women are well past their prime.

Pulman made two further appearances at the Crucible and played his final professional match in 1981. Already

Pulman's big regret
was his failure to score snooker's perfect break - a 147 clearance - though he did manage a 146

contemplating retirement, his mind was made up for him when, the same year, his left leg was broken in five places following a collision with a bus.

John Pulman was born in Teignmouth in 1923 but moved to Plymouth in 1929 when his father, Ernest, sold his confectionery business and bought a billiards club. The young Pulman initially flourished at billiards, making a century break at the age of 12 and a half.

Soon, though, he was competent at snooker and with the family now in Exeter he honed his skills in the new club.

He came to national prominence at the age of 22. His first entry into the English amateur championship resulted in a title win over one Albert Brown. Despite his future successes Pulman steadfastly described his amateur title as "the best of my career". A big regret was his failure to score snooker's



Pulman held the world snooker title from 1957 until 1968

perfect break - a 147 clearance - though he did manage a 146.

When he finally hung up his cue, Pulman wasn't lost to the game. It was while he was hospitalised after breaking his leg that he was offered a contract to commentate on snooker for ITV. He continued to do so until his death, ironically his "rival" on BBC was "Whispering" Ted Lowe who had been Pulman's first manager when he turned professional in 1947.

Lowe is widely regarded as the voice of snooker but Pulman was his superior according to the 1985 world champion Dennis Taylor, now a broadcaster for the BBC: "The sound engineers would often tell me what a pleasure it was to work with 'Pully' because his voice was so marvellous."

Before his ITV deal Pulman worked for the BBC and was behind the microphone at the 1980 world championship when coverage was interrupted by live action from the Iranian Embassy in London. When the broadcast resumed Pulman's opening line was: "Welcome back to the world championship. It's a case of from one Embassy to another."

His mellifluous tone was no doubt enriched by a fondness for a glass of whisky or three. John Pulman was a humorous raconteur and bon viveur on the circuit both during and after his playing days.

TREVOR BAXTER

John Pulman, snooker player; born Teignmouth, Devon 12 December 1923; English Amateur Champion 1946; runner-up, World Snooker Championship 1955-56; world champion 1957-68; married (three children); died Northampton 25 December 1998.

IN WRITING, I seek answers. Curiosity is my muse. But now, after a decade of researching and writing a trilogy of novels based on the life of Josephine Bonaparte, I begin to understand that I may never know the answers to some questions.

The first of Josephine's mysteries concerned destiny. When a girl on Martinique, Josephine was told that she would become queen of France, "more than a queen." As the unmarried daughter of impoverished nobility, she was an unlikely candidate. However, the prediction came true.

There are many who accept that there is a destiny and that destiny can, by mysterious means, be foretold. But it is difficult to believe that there might have been a masterplan in which a girl on the island of Martinique is tagged to become empress of another.

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TREVOR BAXTER

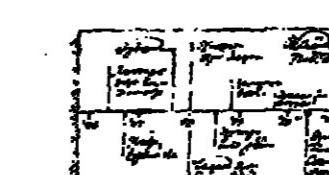
John Pulman, snooker player; born Teignmouth, Devon 12 December 1923; English Amateur Champion 1946; runner-up, World Snooker Championship 1955-56; world champion 1957-68; married (three children); died Northampton 25 December 1998.

It is tempting to resist this interpretation of history, but it cannot be ignored that both Josephine and Napoleon, and to a great extent the public, at the time believed it to be true. Napoleon claimed that Josephine was his lucky star. Many soldiers held that Josephine was the key to Napoleon's extraordinary good luck on the battlefield. After Napoleon divorced her, he was plagued by bad luck: people said that it was because Josephine was no longer with him.

But the question remains: why Josephine? She was a fairly simple woman of great heart. Although intelligent (quiet), she was not a great intellect. Her virtues were simple ones: she was an exceptional mother, a good friend, a caring employer, a loving wife. She knew how to be a good hostess. She had a weakness for hats. But somehow, too, she knew how to be an empress. Does one go about such a thing? There are no "how to" books on the subject, not many classes one can take. Yet she stepped into the role easily and with tremendous grace and humanity.

It was, it was said, as if she had been born to the role and the truth was, she believed it. She believed it was her destiny.

Sandra Gulland is the author of *'The Many Lives and Secret Sorrows of Josephine B'* (Review, £9.99)



HISTORICAL NOTES

SANDRA GULLAND

Was Josephine the key to Napoleon's power?

as the chosen one, was destined to be queen, then would not her partner become king? Of course, we answer, thinking of Bonaparte (always Bonaparte). Yet there were other men in Josephine's life, and each became, after aligning themselves with her, a candidate for a crown. Her first husband, Alexandre Beauharnais, was for a brief two weeks during the Revolution considered the man who ruled France. And then there was Paul Barras, the man who ran the fledgling republic with Josephine as his partner. (Perhaps a platonic one, but a partner nonetheless.) And then, of course, there was Napoleon, an unemployed Corsican officer. A little over four years after he married Josephine he took control of France. The rest, as they say, is history: he crowned himself and Josephine as well.

As empress of the French she was indeed "more than a queen." Five years later Napoleon divorced her and his downfall began.

Coincidence? Was Josephine the key to Napoleon's power? Napoleon's power was indeed great and very much his own, yet most historians will acknowledge that Josephine was a significant (and even essential) part of Napoleon's rise. Yet not only Napoleon, but other men in her life came to power after aligning themselves with her. Was she destined to be queen, her partners king?

Refusal to pay was repudiatory breach

TUESDAY LAW REPORT

26 JANUARY 1999

Cantor Fitzgerald International v Callaghan and others
Court of Appeal
(Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Judge and Lord Justice Tuckey)
21 January 1999

plaintiff was in breach of a contractually enforceable obligation, nevertheless the failure to pay the sums in question did not amount to "a significant breach going to the root of the contract of employment". He found that the defendants' appeals against an injunction restraining them from canvassing or soliciting anyone to transact on behalf of any competitor of the plaintiff.

The defendants were members of a team of inter-dealer brokers employed by the plaintiff on its Belgian securities desk. On 8 January 1997 the defendants purported to resign from their employment by handing in a joint written notice.

They intended to start work with Liberty EuroAsia Ltd, a major competitor of the plaintiff.

Allegations of "poaching" teams of brokers had resulted in a mutual agreement which had expired on 31 December 1996 between the plaintiff and Liberty to end the practice.

When the defendants left to join Liberty, the plaintiff's entire German desk left simultaneously with the same purpose.

The plaintiff applied for an injunction to restrain the defendants, until after 1 May 1997, from canvassing or soliciting anyone to transact on behalf of any competitor of the plaintiff.

The defendants claimed that their contracts of employment had been breached by the plaintiff in that the plaintiff had wrongfully failed or refused to comply with agreed arrangements in relation to the defendants' salary packages, in connection with, *inter alia*, assurances given to them about tax liabilities.

The judge, in granting the injunction, held that although the

more than a temporary fault in the employer's technology, an accounting error or a simple mistake, or illness, accident, or unexpected events, and it would be open to the court to conclude that the breach did not go to the root of the contract.

Where, however, an employer unilaterally reduced his employee's pay or diminished the value of his salary package, the entire foundation of the contract of employment was undermined. An emphatic denial by the employer of his obligation to pay the agreed salary or wage, or a determined resolution not to comply with his contractual obligations in relation to pay and remuneration would, therefore, normally be regarded as repudiatory.

Furthermore, it was doubtful whether defendants had any relevance: if the amount at stake was very small and the circumstances justifying a minimal reduction were explained to the employee, the likelihood was that he would accept a mutual variation of the original contract. However, an apparently slight change imposed on a reluctant employee by economic pressure exercised by the employer should not be confused with a consensual variation.

In the present case the sums at stake, although not great in the context of the overall package, were not trivial. The refusal to pay them was deliberate and determined, motivated by a desire improperly to pressure the defendants into harder work. The decision wholly undermined the contract of employment and, accordingly, constituted a repudiatory breach.

KATE O'HANLON
Barrister

Michaela Geiger

MICHAELA GEIGER reached the high point of her career when she served as a Vice-President of the German Parliament (Bundestag) 1997-98.

She had been put forward twice before but had been beaten by her Christian Social Union (CSU) colleague Hans "Jonny" Klein. She was Chairman of the CSU's working party on foreign policy 1987-91. Appointed State Secretary (junior minister) for Economic Co-operation in 1991, she remained in that post until 1993. Remarkably, she served at the same level in the Ministry of Defence 1993-97.

Geiger's good looks and charm sometimes led people to underestimate her intelligence and think she had got her promotion because of the CSU's "tokenism" towards women. This ignored the courage and determination with which she pursued her ambitions.

Born Michaela Rall in Bavaria, she was the daughter of a Free Democratic local government politician. Her birthplace, the village of Oberammergau, is the deeply conservative home of the internationally famous Passion Play and is renowned for its woodcarvers.

In the predominantly Catholic Bavaria, her family were Evangelical Christians. Michaela Rall went to school in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and after gaining her university matriculation (Abitur), in 1983, went for technical training rather than entering university.

She qualified as a television screen technician in Nuremberg in 1984 and worked at that trade until her marriage in 1987, when she became Michaela Geiger. She joined the CSU in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in 1971, being elected to the local executive in 1975. In the following years her dedication to the Christian Democrats in any region

Geiger retained her seat, taking 58 per cent of the vote. She was one of only three CSU women to be directly elected and one of the six women out of 47 in the CSU parliamentary party.

She lost her place as Vice-President of the Bundestag at the start of the 1998 session after the CDU/CSU election defeat. Even though she was terminally ill with cancer, Geiger continued her parliamentary work. She remained as Deputy Chair of the Bundestag's foreign affairs committee until the last session before Christmas.

DAVID CHILDS

Michaela Gertrud Rall (Michaela Geiger), politician; born Oberammergau, Germany 29 September 1943; married 1967 (one son; marriage dissolved); died Munich 30 December 1998.

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

HEIGHKO: Maureen, née Lambert, widow of W.H. Heighko MBE, died in Ealing on 29 November 1998, aged 94. The funeral took place at Ruislip on 7 January.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

HUTCHESON: A celebration of Stella Hutcheson's life will be held at 6.30pm on Thursday 18 February at Friends House, Euston Road (opposite Euston Station).

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS are charged at £5.50 a line (VAT extra).

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Ronald Allison, journalist and broadcaster, 67; Admiral Sir Desmond Cassard, former Commander-in-Chief, Naval Home Command, 74; Mr Timothy Clifford, director, National Galleries of Scotland, 53; Mr Martin Dunn, editor-in-chief of the *New York Daily News*, 44; Mr Jules Feiffer, playwright and cartoonist, 70; Mr Christopher Hampton playwright, 52; Mr Kim Hughes, cricketer, 45; The Right Rev David Jenkins, former Bishop of Durham, 71; Miss Eartha Kitt, singer, 71; Mr Simon Langdale, former Headmaster, Shrewsbury School, 62; Miss Joan Leslie, actress, 74; Mr Akio Morita, founder, Sony Corporation, 78; Mr Paul Newman, actor and director, 74; Dr Paul Nurse, director-general, Imperial Cancer Research Fund, 50; Miss Veronica Owen, former Headmistress, Malvern Girls' College, 74; Mr Christopher Price, Principal Emeritus, Leeds Metropolitan University, 67; Mr Anthony Solomons, chairman, Singer and Friedlander,

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Ugo (Niccolo) Foscolo, poet, 1778; Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd, judge, poet and editor, 1795; Douglas MacArthur, general, 1880; Stéphane Grappelli, violinist and jazz musician, 1908; Jacqueline du Pré, cellist, 1945.

Deaths: Edward Jenner, physician, discoverer of vaccination, 1823; Jean-Louis-André-Théodore Géricault, painter, 1824; Gérard de Nerval (Gérard Labrunie), poet and writer, 1855; Léon-Michel Gambetta, lawyer and statesman, 1882; William Marsden, surgeon and hospital founder, 1867; Charles George Gordon, general, killed at Khartoum, 1885; Edward G. Robinson, actor, 1973.

On this day: Brazil was discovered by Vicente Yáñez Pinzón, 1500; Sydney, Aus-

LECTURES

National Gallery: Humphrey Way, "New Appearances (iv): Poussin, Landseer with a Calf", 1pm.

Today is Australian Day, Republic Day, India and the Feast Day of St Alberic, St Conan of Man, St Eystein, St Margaret of Hungary, St Paula, St Thordig or Theognitha of Barking, St Timothy and St Titus.

Inter-Parliamentary Union - British Group: Mr David Marshall MP, Chairman of the British Group, Inter-Parliamentary Union, hosted a dinner yesterday evening on board RS Hispaniola, London WC2, in honour of a Parliamentary Delegation from the Slovak Republic. Mr Jozef Migaš, Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, led the delegation.

DINNERS

FRANK KERMODE, in the *London Review of Books*, has caught up with *Bech at Bay* by John Updike, whom he calls "alive, ferile and mobile". One might think this a hangover from Kermode's structuralist phase, but it is a zoological term - able to move; presumably

Hopelessly devoted to you

Her dancers are old hands but the inspiration of Pina Bausch remains as fresh as ever. By Nadine Meisner

Elusive, reclusive: Pina Bausch's mythical status grows by the year. When she joins the curtain-call at the end of a performance, it hardly seems possible it is her and not a hologram. She is a gaunt, baggy-trousered figure, an overworked creator of potent images who smiles a sphinx smile and locks arms with her interpreters.

Tanztheater Wuppertal are her family, her nomadic tribe, 30 men and women who dance, speak, sing and play games. They perform on stages covered in grass, or snow, or mud. They are so devoted to Pina they will throw themselves against walls, wear nappies and smear their faces with lipstick – and that's just the men. They are multinational, as individually flavoured as ordinary people, the opposite of flawless ballet clones. They act with an uncluttered, childlike directness. They are you and me, with our childhood experiences, our adult hopes and fears, our joys and miseries.

Like us, they are all ages – although when the company started 25 years ago they more or less belonged to the same generation. Some early members have retired but rush on stage when Pina beckons them back for a revival, as Malou Airaudo did for the Bausch-Gluck *Iphigenia in Tauris* at the 1996 Edinburgh Festival. Some continue in the company, such as bulky Jan Minarik who specialises in carrying and cross-dressing, and Dominique Mercy, a sinewy blond Frenchman, edging 50 but still dancing flat-out solos.

The performances of *Viktor* this week will be the company's first London season since 1982. London needs them more than they need London. Wherever they appear, they are sold out. *Ticketless* despoilures stand on pavements – in the June clamminess of Paris, the December snow of Berlin – holding scrawled notices, "one ticket please". A reluctant interviewee, Bausch manages very well without PRs and journalists. Everything you want to know about her, she says, you can see in her work. But occasionally she caves in, or allows her dancers to cave in, especially this time, to please an edgy Sadler's Wells publicity machine.

Dominique Mercy turns out to be charming and informative. I ask how it is that Bausch's performers – trained dancers who do a daily ballet class – don't have the stiff verbal delivery of non-actors. He explains: "It's because much of the material comes from the dancers. What you see in the pieces, in these small scenes, are the result of questions which Pina has asked us."

Bausch uses these questions or cues to elicit improvisations. "And each dancer responds in a personal way, in keeping with their experiences and imagination." So out of this come many of the Bausch's trademark components: the enchanting visual jokes, such as the makeshift swimming-pool in last year's *Masurca Flug*, a plastic sheet held by two men and filled with buckets of water; or the rerunning of intense moments until they become heart-breaking, such as the wail in *Tanzbend II* (1992), who repeatedly drags herself out of the snow, only to be



"What I try is to find the pictures that best convey the emotion I want to convey": Pina Bausch's 'Nelken' from 1982

Geraint Lewis

carried back tenderly and cruelly.

If the pieces have the multiplicity of life, it's because they come from just that: from multiple points of view, with Bausch as a funnel distilling them into theatre. She sifts, edits, collates and glued together.

"There is a trust between her and us," says Mercy, who in *Nelken* (1982) plunges his face into a pile of raw sliced onions. "I know that she will not exploit us simply as a form of exhibitionism. It is not the purpose of her work."

He first met Bausch in 1971. "I was immediately dazzled and touched by her person and her choreography," he says. Others recognised her genius early on and Bausch did not struggle through wilderness years. Born 58 years ago, in Solingen, in the Ruhr, she enrolled as a dance student in the Folkwang School in nearby Essen.

The distinguished choreographer Kurt Jooss was in charge of the dance department and Bausch learnt classical ballet, modern dance and choreography. At 19 she won a scholarship to New York, where she went to the Juilliard School of Music and worked with another exceptional choreographer, Antony Tudor.

She returned to Essen to assist Jooss with the Folkwang studio, the school's graduate performing group which he was restarting. She created her first piece for them in 1968, remembered as "very abstract, very dancery," and soon after became the artistic director, a post she still holds.

Her danced versions of Gluck's

tastes of a boy," Mercy remembers. "And there was a parade of strange guests: a bearded woman, twins, a sick man in a nightgown – that was me." The house was only half-full to start with. "But then people started leaving, slamming the doors behind them."

Her danced versions of Gluck's

Iphigenia in Tauris (1974) and *Orpheus and Eurydice* (1975) scored an immediate success, however, as did her monumental *Rite of Spring* (1975). After *Café Müller* (1978) she always included words; from *Bluebeard* (1977) onwards she used improvisation as her creative tool and her work acquired its prismatic, episodic structure.

Detractors claim that this has ossified into formula; yet to me

there are clear shifts of theme and emphasis. For example, a Fascist oppression runs through the red carnations of *Nelken*, which Jan Minarik closes by declaring: "I became a dancer because I did not want to be a soldier." Whereas *Danzon* (1995) seems to be about ageing and the sadness of this, especially for dancers. It also marks Bausch's performing comeback in a wrenchingly elegiac solo of arm gestures that resemble a farewell.

So what about *Viktor*, premiered in 1986? It exemplifies Bausch's desire to preserve the old as well as create the new. It is one of her vast, broad-canvassed spectacles, like 1980, which she showed on her last London visit. *Viktor* was also her first co-production with funding from a foreign city – Rome, in this case – an arrangement she has often repeated since.

"When we do a co-production," says Mercy, "we usually arrive three weeks early in the city to gather sensations and generally open our antennae." These impressions colour the studio improvisations, but the result is an evocation instead of a literal depiction. *Viktor* is not about

Rome, because what interests Pina is not the city, it is the people living there."

Who is *Viktor*? "He's a ghost; but it will be up to you to decide who or what this ghost is." What else can he say about the themes? He laughs and shakes his head. "When Pina starts work, she doesn't even talk to us about themes." Although she must have certain ideas in the back of her mind, she prefers to keep things fluid, so that the material can develop an organic life of its own. Similarly, to explain a piece before I see it, is to fix my expectations beforehand, closing my mind. "It would be a betrayal to explain *Viktor* to you," Mercy says.

"What I try is to find the pictures, or the images, that can best express the emotion I want to convey," Bausch once told me. "I am not telling a story in a normal way. Each person in the audience is part of the piece; you bring your own experience, your own fantasy, your own feeling in response to what you see. Everybody comes away with a different impression."

Sadler's Wells, London EC1, tomorrow to Sat (0171-863 8000)

A ghost of Noël past

THEATRE

BLITHE SPIRIT

SALISBURY PLAYHOUSE

"IT IS fairly natural," wrote Noel Coward, "that my writing should be appreciated casually, because my personality, performances, music and legend get in the way. Some day, I suspect, when Jesus has definitely got me for a sunbeam, my works may be adequately assessed."

What he did not realise was that by then, 50 years of comic acting tradition would have intervened to cloud the crisp clarity of his work. Gareth Armstrong's production of *Blithe Spirit* is a mishmash of styles, from the heightened outrage of Ayckbourn to the cartoon caricature of 'Allo, 'Allo. There is still a masterpiece underneath, but attempts to tart it up serve only to detract – as if someone has pebbledashed Rouen Cathedral.

The fault lies primarily in an apparent lack of faith. There seems to be an overwhelming devotion to getting the laugh from the portrayal – the funny walk or the comic grimace – not the line. Many of the cast stretch themselves to drag a giggle where no giggle should be dragged, all too often at the expense of Coward's expertly crafted writing, with – paradoxically – many comic throwaways simply thrown away.

The greatest harm is done by Fenella Fielding's Madame Arcati. Her drawing eccentricity and grinding comic "business" do the script no favours at all, ruining the pacing and rhythm of Coward's wit.

But the production is saved by Celia Nelson's Ruth. In a play about reincarnation, it is spooky to see an actress who is such a complete embodiment of a young Glenda Jackson. She plays the aggrieved second wife, displaced by her predecessor's ghost, with scalpel precision – and she justifiably garners most of the laughs. As her deceased rival, Marstrand Cartwright, when she forgets this she becomes a fine, pebbled Elvira.

Ultimate responsibility must be laid at the door of the director Gareth Armstrong seems to have devoted too much time to blocking the characters in a whirlwind of moves so convoluted as to induce dizziness, and too little time to ensuring that the cast grasped the art of Cowardian comedy, a skill as specific as *commedia dell'arte* or Noh theatre.

You have to strip away a lot of the staging to get to it, but Coward's script still shines through, the lines and laughs as pure and entertaining as they were when he wrote it – in less than a week – 58 years ago.

The production amuses, but despite the contemporary "improvements", not because of them. We can still agree with Coward's modest assessment, "with the maximum of self-satisfaction, that those six days in Portmeirion in May 1941 were not wasted". It will take a different production, however, before *Blithe Spirit's* true qualities are once again fully displayed.

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Lyrics. Who needs them?

POP

MOGWAI
ASTORIA



Soft, loud, soft the Mogwai way

Steve Gillett

In the hands of less skilful practitioners of what some label "post rock", this style has already become generic before the wider world has even woken up to it, but Mogwai handle it skilfully, never sounding like a mere rock band that's neglected to pen any lyrics.

STEVE JELBERT
A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper

If it ain't got that swing

CLASSICAL

LPO/WAYNE MARSHALL
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
LONDON

cause obviously you wouldn't be there if it were so obvious

The jazz connection was a little fuzzy thought through Prokofiev apart (call that an aberration), if you are going to include Leonard Bernstein on the bill, then surely you go for one of his New York pieces, his dance music, his jam, "Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs". Good though it was to hear again "Divertimento" – written for the Boston Symphony centennial in 1980 and rarely performed – is rather too cryptic in its musical machinations to be fully appreciated in the context of a programme like this. His songs went down rather better, thanks to the presence of Kim Criswell.

Granted, she's not a natural ingenue. "Dream with Me" – a gorgeous and little-known Bernstein song dropped from his 1949 score for *Peter Pan* – was by no means the sweetest soprano you've ever heard. But hot on her heels came wisecracking Ruth from Ohio with her "One Hundred Easy Ways To Lose A Man" from *Wonderful Town*, at which point those of us with any sense were taking cover. And better yet was her virtuosic rendition of Dinah's scene "What a Movie!" – from Bernstein's remarkable one-act opera *Trouble in Tahiti* – which isn't a number but a nervous breakdown. Shucking her concert gown for a garish South Sea sari, Criswell left us in no doubt about that. Later, she and Marshall paid homage to Duke Ellington in his centenary year, but this mighty handful of his

greatest hits didn't really sit so well in this hall. John Fox's arrangements (particularly his way with strings) got around the "symphony orchestra" anomaly, but where piano alone nursed the voice, the sound balance was too uneven.

Then again, Marshall is a better pianist than he is a conductor. It's one thing keeping tugs on a jazz band – Shostakovich's "Suite No 1" more or less plays itself – but getting Gershwin around Paris (*An American in Paris*) is another matter. Was he late for his plane? You'd expect a jazzier like Marshall to sink his soul into the central blues (where were those insinuating saxes?), but real freedom demands the kind of discipline (and technique) he doesn't yet have.

EDWARD SECKERSON

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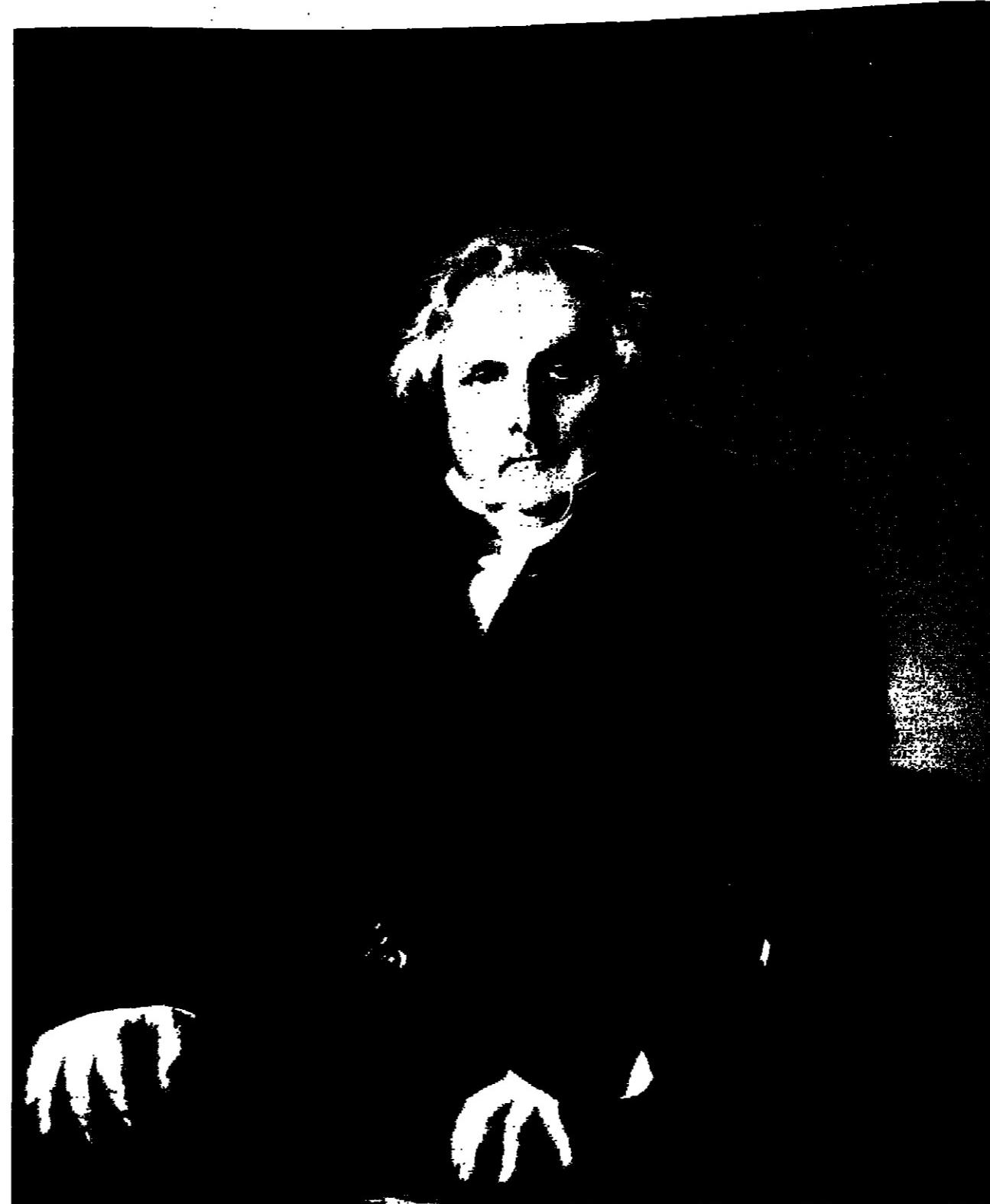
Rossini

Adventures in the skin trade

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres had a thing about power. About sex. About plump flesh. And he loved a frock. By Tom Lubbock



'Madame Moitessier' and 'Monsieur Bertin': 'Ingres, there's a consciousness that a clothed body is a naked body touched all over'



National Gallery of Art, Washington/Musée du Louvre, Paris

The painter has three arms – or so apparently he'd have us think. In an early self-portrait, he stands before his blank canvas, one arm rubbing it with a cloth, another ready with the chalk, and a third... or rather, no. But slung over his near shoulder, there's a hefty overcoat with a prominent, solid-looking distinctly limb-like sleeve. The eye can't help doing a double-take every time.

Now you may put this down to a young artist's oversight, but I'm not sure. Ingres (or it is he) was a precocious painter. The oversights of his youth aren't overcome. They turn into the idiosyncrasies of his maturity. He was one of the smartest and most intense of European portrait painters. He could summon up the human presence as few others could. He also had very strong and funny feelings about the human form.

This wasn't always obvious. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) used to be one of painting's straight men, the epitome of the slick, the smooth, the square, the 19th-century academic artist *par excellence*. What that view saw was his formality, his high micro-finish, his astoundingly sensitive rendering of tone and texture – and his unfinching flattery of the pride and property of his bourgeois sitters. Rightly: without those qualities, technical and moral, the portraits would be nothing.

But going round Portraits by Ingres, which opens at the National Gallery tomorrow, dwelling on one astonishing creation after another, you're conscious at the same time of other agendas which can hardly be called hidden.

Their voluptuousness isn't only a matter of shape. They are lapped in luxury, a sensuous opulence into which their bodies half-disintegrate. The oval image of *Madame Rivière* is like a sweet-jar full of bon-bons and jujubes – a pile-up of gorgeous stuffs, and among them some pieces of fine, plump flesh. A moral critique here is both obvious and powerless. It is

realised again and again in his mythological fantasies, and which always infects his pictures of real women, too.

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laid in her lap. Something very strange happens to these ladies' limbs. They go soft and limp. They seem to be filleted, or like empty skins filled with water, rolling. They often don't seem to be properly attached to the rest of the bodies.

These tender morsels of swelling chubiness are part of a general air of molestation and innuendo, of voyeurism – or its tactile equivalent – as in accidentally on purpose rubbing or pressing up against someone's body in a crowd. The dresses

highly respectable Dublin ladies" complain of Leopold Bloom's unwanted attentions. "He said that he had seen from the gods my peerless globes as I sat in a box of the Theatre Royal... He lauded almost extravagantly my nether extremities, my swelling calves in silk hose drawn up to the limit, and eulogised glowingly my other hidden treasures in priceless lace..." In

Ingres, too, it's the stately poorness of the women that pricks on the fantasy. In Ingres, too, there's the consciousness that a clothed body is a naked body touched all over. These are portraits in which at every point – to use the old divorce-court phrase – intimacy occurs.

Is it only women who get such treatment from Ingres? I would have thought so. But a fellow critic said that she got this feeling off the male portraits too, and I can see it in some of them. The spreading, placid features of Joseph-Antoine Moitessier seem to lack a supporting skull. His soft-brushed brown coat seems to lack a body inside it. But for a masterfully ambiguous study in masculinity, the portrait *Louis-François Bertin* has no rival.

Look at the way clothing and furniture feel their way round his stout and imposing figure. The sharp, curving edge of his high collar nicks his jowly chops. The smoothly curving edge of his chairback encases his circumference like the rim of a tub. Notice the patch of bright red chair-

seat that peeps out just beneath his crotch, and sets off the dark contour of his trousered testicles – and then implies his whole, massive underside. Notice the oddly commanding nature of the hands-on-knees pose, the limp arms and stiff, crabby hands that seem to have been just gently placed in that position.

In the end, you have to say that Ingres had a thing (call it a vision, call it an obsession). It was a thing about power and passivity and impassivity, how they're all mixed up. In a way it's a natural concern for a bespoke portraitist – artist, sitter: who commands? who obeys? – but it goes deeper than that. It can take the form of worshipping sensual stupor, as in the extraordinary Washington portrait of *Madame Moitessier*, where she stands statuesque, her head and neck jawlessly fused, her face that of a dumb Roman matron's bust, her blank, lazy eyes drifting in divergent directions, her left arm hanging soft and dislocated, her shoulders quite asymmetrical under her dead-centre parted hair-do, her underlip giving a sulky little pout. And I'm not sure what it's about, but it's absolutely enthralling.

Portraits by Ingres – Images of an Epoch is at the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2, every day, tomorrow to 25 April; admission £6, concessions £4

THE INDEPENDENT COLLECTOR

JOHN WINDSOR'S GUIDE TO COLLECTING CONTEMPORARY ART. THIS WEEK: CHARLES HADCOCK

If you like the look of Nautilus shells, the whorled patterns of sunflower heads or the proportions of the Parthenon, it is for the same reason – what the ancients called "sacred geometry".

Whether in art or nature, certain geometric proportions appeal naturally to the eye. Others seem inharmonious. It is a matter of scientific fact. The ancient Greeks and Romans, and the masters of the Renaissance, knew about the rules of correct proportion and applied them in their art and architecture.

Our age has distinguished itself by forgetting them. But when all the impressionisms, expressionisms and sensationalisms have run their course, visual art that obeys the timeless laws of sacred geometry will maintain its magical appeal.

The 33-year-old sculptor Charles Hadcock is almost unique in his observance of the rules of correct proportion.

His reward came last year when *Passacaglia*, his 20-tonne, 5 metre high abstract sculpture in cast

iron, was permanently installed on Brighton beach.

Instead of inspiring derision from the customers of the nearby candyfloss and shelfish stalls, it left them wide-eyed and full of praise. Passers-by told Hadcock they loved it, but could not reason why. Hadcock's answer – "sacred geometry" – left them little wiser. Your chance to install some of his sacred geometry in your home comes next month, when he is holding a selling exhibition of his drawings and maquettes at Imperial College, London. The exhibition includes a bronze cast of the maquette for *Passacaglia*.

Hadcock, RCA graduate, has worked the back of his copy of the *Architectura of Vitruvius*, the 1st century AD architect and engineer who was the Renaissance's chief reference on sacred geometry. His trained eye now spots Vitruvius's celebrated "golden ratio" – that is 1:1.618 – in the most unusual places, even in

the shape of polystyrene boxes for frozen fish. By chance, he bumped into the designer of the boxes, who had never heard of the golden ratio and told him: "It's the strongest, most economical shape – and it looks good".

Hadcock's use of sacred

geometry is not always so obvious. He sometimes applies the "golden ratio" to the shape of the space between forms, as well as to the forms themselves, or deviates slightly from it so that the sculpture seems to be striving to achieve geometric perfection.

Despite the mysticism that has surrounded it since the Renaissance, the golden ratio is mathematically very simple. Take a pencil, draw a line, and divide it unequally with a dot, such that the proportion of the smaller bit of line to the longer bit equals the proportion of the longer bit to the line as a whole. That is the golden ratio.

If you draw a "golden rectangle" – that is, one whose long and short sides are in this ratio to one another – you will find that its interior can be divided into a perfect square plus a rectangle of the same golden proportion. If you do this repeatedly – in theory, ad infinitum – you will soon recognise the spirals

of the Nautilus shell and the sunflower head.

For the mathematically inclined, the ratio is actually 1:1.6180339... an "irrational" number; that is, one that goes on for ever. Perhaps it is magic, after all. The more practical-minded prefer the rule-of-thumb interpretation, which is 8:13.

In Hadcock's *Passacaglia*, one arm is 1.618 the size of the smaller arm. There is tension between the two because, although at first glance they appear to be trying to complete a circle, they are too far apart and their curves are not circular but logarithmic – the pure accelerating curve of the Nautilus.

Exhibition prices: drawings from £700, maquettes from £1,500. The *Passacaglia* maquette is £3,000.

"Charles Hadcock, Drawings and Maquettes", 3-23 Feb, Tues-Sun (11am-6pm), at the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, The Gallery, Ground Floor, Sherfield Building, Exhibition Road, London SW7 (0171-594 8442)

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By Tom Lubbock

HEALTH

Crohn's disease causes chronic intestinal inflammation, and affects thousands. One expert says it is caused by bacteria in cows' milk, and is curable. The medical profession is divided. By Liz Bestic



Jordan Lane and his mother, Lesley. From being a thin and wasted young lad, he is completely healthy and has never drunk cows' milk again! Keith Dobney

A split over the milk

In the next few months, Infliximab, another new drug for the treatment of Crohn's disease, will come on to the market in the UK. It is being heralded by many in the medical establishment as a breakthrough in the treatment of this condition, which affects more than 40,000 people in the UK.

But one London professor believes that the disease is caused by a bacterium that can be found in the milk being poured into teakers and breakfast bowls across the land every morning. And he is not the only expert who feels that Infliximab is just another treatment that suppresses the symptoms of Crohn's disease but does not tackle its causes.

Crohn's disease most commonly affects the small intestine and colon, causing ulceration along the gut that results in intense pain, diarrhoea, bleeding, weight loss and tiredness. For most Crohn's sufferers, the best they can hope for is steroids or anti-inflammatory drugs such as Infliximab. However, even with this treatment about 75 per cent of patients still require surgery at some stage in their lives, and even surgery does not cure the disease.

John Hermon-Taylor, professor of surgery at St George's Hospital in London, who has a special interest in molecular and cellular science, believes the causes of Crohn's disease are starting us in the face. He has been working on the disease since the Seventies and believes it is caused by an organism called *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (*M. paratB*), which is also responsible for Johne's disease in cattle.

The bug, which is very similar to tuberculosis, is found in domestic species and wild animals all over Europe and North America and has increased significantly over the course of this century because of intensive

farming methods. It has learnt to live in the intestines of animals and causes chronic inflammation of the gut," he says. "The bug is then shed by the infected animals into their milk, which is passed on to humans."

A recent study funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) showed that out of 31 cartons of milk from 16 pasteurisation plants, six cartons tested positive for *M. paratB*. "If we want to get rid of *M. paratB* in milk, we need to be pasteurising milk at a higher temperature than we do for TB," says Prof Hermon-Taylor.

"As for the treatment of Crohn's, although the bug is similar to TB it is not affected by anti-tuberculosis drugs. However, we have discovered that this bug can be successfully killed off with a combination of two specific antibiotic drugs, rifabutin and clarithromycin. This treatment is effective in 80 per cent of all cases of Crohn's disease."

Prof Hermon-Taylor's research has been duplicated in Houston, where Dr David Graham conducted a controlled trial looking at the efficacy of clarithromycin as a treatment for Crohn's. They randomly assigned 17 people with severe Crohn's to receive either simple conventional therapy, or therapy with antibiotics. Forty per cent of the patients on antibiotics became well and stayed well for up to three years.

So why is medical opinion so divided on the causes of Crohn's disease and its treatment? One reason is that *M. paratB* is almost impossible to detect, as it "hides" within human cells. "You can't see it down a microscope or culture it in a laboratory, and immunological tests don't detect it either," says Prof Hermon-Taylor. "The only way you can detect it is by revealing the presence of its DNA, and even then the test has to be done extremely accurately."

Dr Derek Jewel, senior gastro-



*'Jordan is living proof that *M. paratB* can cause Crohn's disease – and that it can be killed off with the use of these drugs'*

enterologist at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, is sceptical about Hermon-Taylor's research. "Professor Hermon-Taylor's original paper showed up *M. paratB* in about two-thirds of patients with Crohn's disease, but the specificity of the trial was questionable. Although his work seems very convincing, the concern is that the test has never successfully been repeated. Some very reputable people have tried to detect the DNA in the tissue but just cannot do it," he says.

But Prof Hermon-Taylor is adamant that his studies have been repeated successfully elsewhere.

"Since 1992 there have been 18 other studies using the DNA test on Crohn's and nine say it's there and nine say it's not. And all the doctors are arguing like a tree full of parrots."

However, at the University of Central Florida researchers have now perfected a blood test for *M. paratB* in human beings, and in a recent study 92 per cent of people with Crohn's tested positive.

One person who is in no doubt about the link between *M. paratB* and Crohn's disease is Lesley Lane. Ten years ago her son Jordan was out playing football with his mates. When he came indoors he had a swelling on the side of his neck. The GP diagnosed infected lymph nodes. But after two weeks he was taken to Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge for tests.

"I was told he had Hodgkin's lymphoma and signed the form to remove the lump," says Lesley. "Three days later they told me it wasn't Hodgkin's, but a form of TB."

A few weeks later the lump came up again and they removed it. Jordan was put on anti-tuberculosis drugs but they didn't work. He had to have more lumps removed and then he seemed fine until 1993, when he suddenly started to get severe abdominal pain and diarrhoea. He lost weight rapidly and was tired and listless. "He looked as if he was wasting away," says Lesley. He was referred to a paediatrician, Dr Nick Barnes, at Addenbrookes. "He recommended we go and see Prof Hermon-Taylor. When he asked me if I was prepared to travel, I said I would go to the ends of the earth if it would make Jordan better."

Prof Hermon-Taylor had already been sent a sample of tissue from Jordan's lump. "He showed us some pictures of cows and pointed to one in particular that looked particularly sick and anorexic. He then explained that the DNA from the cow matched the DNA from Jordan's lump, and told

us he thought that Jordan had Crohn's caused by *M. paratB*. It was the first time anyone had explained Jordan's illness in a way that made perfect sense," says Lesley.

"He told us that the combination of these two antibiotics would cure the problem, but Jordan was never allowed to drink cows' milk again. He was totally honest about the drugs. They had only ever been tried on adults, and they could make Jordan feel ill. But Jordan was so keen to get well, he was prepared to try anything."

Today, Jordan is a strapping 17-year-old, in his first job as a trainee accountant. "From being a thin and wasted young lad, he is completely healthy, and has never drunk cows' milk again. I would advise anyone who has Crohn's to give this treatment a try. I am totally in Prof Hermon-Taylor's debt," says Lesley.

Dr Barnes is also delighted with Jordan's progress. "Jordan is living proof that *M. paratB* can cause Crohn's disease, and that it can be killed off with these drugs. Far from being a rare case, we believe we are seeing more and more *M. paratB* in the community. My wife is a GP in a practice of around 14,000 patients. Out of the 25 who have Crohn's disease, at least half have a story similar to Jordan's which can be traced to *M. paratB*," says Dr Barnes. "If I got Crohn's disease today, I would go on the drug treatment like a shot."

Prof Hermon-Taylor has the last word. "We know that in 1999 about 4,000 people will come down with Crohn's disease, which will ruin their lives. In the first half of this century, we dealt with TB in cattle; it's time we now deal with *M. paratB* before it becomes an epidemic," he says.

For further information on Crohn's disease contact the National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease on 01272 842296

The yoghurt cure that's also a killer

'Friendly' gut bacteria offer a radical alternative to antibiotics. By Charles Arthur

SURGEONS IN Sweden are helping people to recover from major surgery by adding bacteria to their gut, rather than using antibiotics which kill off both beneficial and harmful bacteria. This could ease the growing problem of antibiotic resistance in hospitals.

The system, developed by Bengt Jeppsson, professor of surgery at University Hospital in Malmö, feeds patients with live bacteria normally found in cheeses and fermented vegetables, in order to encourage their growth in the intestine. At least six people who were in intensive care, and some children with recurrent intestinal infections, have been cured by the

use of such "probiotic" treatment. A total of 300 are now being tested in clinical trials to last through 1999.

"It's a completely new concept," said Prof Jeppsson. "The lactobacillus [is] important for healing ulcers and other wounds in the bowel. When we artificially increase the amount of them in the bowel, they transplant the pathogenic bacteria – which also means that you don't have to use antibiotics."

Most people think of bacteria as harmful, an image encouraged by adverts for household cleaners. But only a tiny proportion pose any risk; many more play a positive role.

At present, people facing

major surgery are first starved (to prevent choking while under anaesthetic), then fed on intravenous drips after the operation. Bacteria that normally thrive in the gut die off, while the lining of the intestine becomes more permeable as the body increasingly tries to absorb nutrients. This raised permeability can let dangerous pathogens pass into the bloodstream to cause organ failure or blood-poisoning.

To avoid this, post-operative patients are often given antibiotics. But these indiscriminately kill off both beneficial and harmful bacteria – and leave antibiotic-resistant pathogens unaffected.

Professor Jeppsson said, "The theory is that in ancient times we had to store foods using fermentation products. That lets these bacteria into the gut... dogs that bury bones get a constant supply of bacteria from the breakdown of the tissues. Many other animals do the same thing... our food intake now includes too little of these helpful bacteria."

The introduction of the probiotic system is taking a long time, though. The first tests, on six people who were on antibiotics, but did not improve, showed signs of organ failure, were carried out in 1996. All made a full recovery.

"It is frustrating, but as soon

as we have the full results we could implement this straightaway," said Prof Jeppsson.

A replacement for standard antibiotic use is sorely needed. Earlier this year British doctors were criticised by a House of Commons Select Committee for over-prescribing antibiotics for routine infections – including viruses, against which they have no effect. Meanwhile more hospital patients are falling ill with MRSA, a resistant strain of *staphylococcus*.

The probiotic approach to surgery has not been tested in Britain, but doctors at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge are using it as a treatment for irritable bowel syndrome.

Innumeracy breeds fear

HEALTH CHECK



JEREMY LAURANCE

breast cancer never exceeds 20 per cent.

To illustrate this, the authors used a life table based on figures from the Ontario Cancer Registry. Of 1,000 women born in the same year, an average of 17 will die by the age of 40, none of them from breast cancer. In their forties and fifties, 54 will die – nine from breast cancer and nine from heart disease and stroke. In their sixties and seventies 305 women will die, 105 from heart disease and 18 from breast cancer.

By the age of 85, 203 women will have died of heart disease and 33 of breast cancer. However, 99 will have developed the disease, approaching the one in nine statistic.

This demonstrates how heart disease and stroke exact a far greater toll than breast cancer. Yet a survey by the National Council on Ageing in the US found that just 9 per cent of women said the condition they feared most was heart disease compared with 61 per cent who said cancer (mainly breast cancer), and there is no reason to suppose that British perceptions would be different.

This distorted view may have important consequences for women's health. Aside from the obvious point that they can, if they are so minded, do something to reduce their risk of heart disease, by changing their lifestyle, women who might benefit from HRT may choose not to take it because of their fear of breast cancer.

Breast awareness campaigns typically use images of young women and are targeted at 20-40-year-old readers of women's magazines. But two facts are worth stressing. Breast cancer is predominantly a disease of older women; and for most of them it is not lethal.

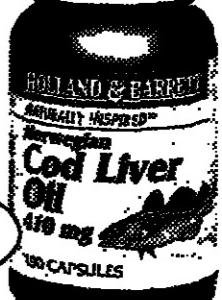
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Is your therapist a friend?

A good counsellor offers many of the qualities you might look for in a friendship. By Paul Gordon

One of the comments that most annoys psychotherapists and counsellors is that therapy is "just like talking to a friend". It's annoying because it's saying that, really, there is nothing special to what we as therapists do - anyone can do it - and there's the implication, too, that really it's all a bit self-indulgent. I have taken issue with such remarks more times than I care to remember.

And yet, I have come to think that there may be more to such remarks than insult or ignorance. Therapy is, I believe, much more akin to a form of friendship than it is to anything else. What is being expressed when people compare therapy and friendship is a belief in what friends should be able to do, what friendship might consist of - and a complaint of what it too often does not. Think of the elements of a good friend. He is someone who has our interests at heart, who has a sense of our history and who respects us. She does not suspend criticism, but is nevertheless tactful. He is someone who can stand back from what we are describing, who can talk honestly and openly to us, who has time for us, who is attentive and thoughtful and appreciative and can keep his own

feelings out of, say, any predicament that we might be describing. These are, to be sure, ideal qualities. Any one who has them is lucky indeed; their friends are lucky still. But they are, I suspect, what we long for in ourselves as in others. Are they not also the qualities, or some of them, of a good therapist? I believe they are.

"A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud," said the philosopher and writer Ralph Waldo Emerson. And this, precisely, is what therapy is about, an opportunity to voice your thoughts, however abhorrent, unacceptable, uniformed, confused or painful you might think them, without fear of judgement or retribution.

What is being expressed when people compare therapy and friendship is a belief in what friends should be able to do, what friendship might consist of - and a complaint of what it too often does not. Think of the elements of a good friend. He is someone who has our interests at heart, who has a sense of our history and who respects us. She does not suspend criticism, but is nevertheless tactful. He is someone who can stand back from what we are describing, who can talk honestly and openly to us, who has time for us, who is attentive and thoughtful and appreciative and can keep his own

boundaries and conventions, its own sense of what is appropriate.

The negotiation of these regulations and conventions in a friendship is, of course, a struggle and a challenge for both parties, and it is to do with whether a person wants, or can even tolerate, the degree of closeness and intimacy desired and offered. So, too, must you deal with the disappointments and differences inevitable when two people try to meet each other.

There is, of course, a major difference between most forms of friendship and therapy. A social friendship that does not involve a degree of reciprocity at least over time, is unsustainable. A lack of reciprocity is, I suspect, why so many friendships founder on a reef of resentment of one kind or another. Therapy, on the other hand, is not reciprocal. As a therapist, I am there for the other person and responsible to them; they are not

there for me. But this does not make the relationship any less a friendship, and it does not preclude a reciprocity if this seems appropriate, in the sense of a sharing of your experience or thought.

The fact that one often pays for therapy is a sign that the relationship has its limits, a statement that it is ultimately a professional relationship. And yet, all the qualities of a good friendship - a welcome, an acceptance, an attunement, an at-

Switch - bias in



Lying around chatting to your friends is great, but lying on the couch talking to your therapist can be an equally rewarding relationship

London Features

content and form that cannot be prescribed in advance but must, they are to be meaningful, be negotiated by the people involved. In the end, whatever the style or orientation of the particular therapist, therapy is a relationship, or at least the offer of one.

Paul Gordon is a psychotherapist and author of *Face to Face - Therapy as Ethics*, published by Constable, price £15.99

Don't worry about weight gain when you're taking HRT

CAN YOU explain why I should have put on weight since I have been on a low dose of oestrogen for HRT? I am 60 and I swim 250m nearly every day, walk everywhere and eat lots of fresh fruit and veg and little fat, salt and sugar. My appetite has not changed and I eat no more; indeed I drink less alcohol than before I started HRT. Why does oestrogen cause weight to go up, and what can I do about it? Women who are thinking about starting hormone replacement therapy are often concerned that

it will make them put on weight. The best research into this is the Postmenopausal Estrogen and Progesterone Intervention (with apologies for the American terminology), which compared the weight of women who took a placebo with women who took various types of HRT over a period of three years.

This study found that women who took a placebo gained more weight than women who took HRT. Women who took no hormones had an average weight gain of 4.6lb, while women who took HRT gained between 1.5

and 2.9lb. The lowest weight gains were recorded by women who took oestrogen on its own. Women who took HRT preparations containing both oestrogen and progesterone gained slightly more. So, the scientific evidence is that HRT does not cause weight gain. Keep up the exercise, continue with a low-fat healthy diet, and reduce your calorie intake a little more.

I AM a male in my late forties. At what age should I ask my GP for a prostate check?

A QUESTION OF HEALTH



DR FRED KAVALIER

simple, straightforward answer to this question. There is certainly no need to check for non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate gland unless you are beginning to get symptoms. The common symptoms are a slow and weak urinary stream, and difficulty in starting or stopping the urinary stream. If you are worrying about cancer of the prostate, you are probably thinking of having a PSA test, which is a blood test that can pick up early signs of prostate cancer. But the PSA test is often unreliable - some people will

have raised PSA levels even though they do not have cancer, and some people with cancer will have normal levels of PSA.

The best way to find out more about the PSA test is to read *Screening for prostate cancer: Information for men considering or asking for PSA tests*. This is published by the NHS Centre for Review and Dissemination at the University of York. You can get a copy from the NHS Information Service on 0800 655544, or on the Internet at <http://www.york.ac.uk/mst/crd/patprost.htm>.

IS IT too late to have a flu vaccination?

The mini-epidemic of flu has probably passed its peak, but it is certainly not too late to have a flu jab, particularly if you are elderly or suffer from a chronic disease, such as asthma or bronchitis.

Please send questions to *A Question of Health*, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL; fax 0171-293 2182; or e-mail to health@independent.co.uk. Dr Kavalier cannot respond personally to questions

CLASSIFIED

Public Notices

OPRAF

RAILWAYS ACT 1993 PROPOSAL TO CLOSE PART OF THE NETWORK

The Franchising Director gives notice under Section 39 of the Railways Act 1993 that with effect from 31 March 1999 Railtrack PLC proposes to close the following part of the network:

The Franchising Director supports this proposal.

Objections to the proposed closure may be made, preferably in writing, within six weeks of 26 January 1999, i.e. by 9 March 1999 with Ms Teresa Perchard, Passenger Services Group, Office of the Rail Regulator, 1 Waterhouse Square, 138-142 Holborn, London EC1N 2ST. Telephone: 0645 645625 (all calls charged at local rate). Facsimile: 0171 282 2043.

The Rail Regulator may make objections public or copy them to the operator proposing the closure.

A statement of the reasons for the proposed closure can be inspected on any working day between 10am and 4pm at the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (OPRAF), Golding's House, 2 Hay's Lane, London SE1 2HB, telephone 071 940 4261, or at the Rail Users' Consultative Committee for North Western England, at the following address: The Secretary, The Rail Users' Consultative Committee for North Western England, Bouton House, 17-21 Chorlton Street, Manchester M1 3HY or at The Civic Centre, Rickergate, Carlisle CA3 8QG.

Copies of the statement can be obtained by request from OPRAF. There will be no charge for copies.

The Rail Regulator will send a copy of every objection to the proposed closure which is lodged with him to the Rail Users' Consultative Committee (RUC) for North Western England. The RUC will then consider whether the proposed closure will cause any hardship and, if so, what reasonable means of alleviating this hardship would be. The RUC will prepare a report on its conclusions and send it to the Rail Regulator. The Rail Regulator will decide whether the proposed closure should be allowed and, if so, whether any condition should be attached to the closure.

The siding is to be closed in order to allow the expansion of the car park at Carlisle station. This is in line with the Virgin Trains strategy aimed at increasing the volume of passengers using this station. 40 additional spaces will be created, the standard of 70 existing spaces will be improved.

The closure of these sidings will have no impact on any operator's ability to provide passenger services.

CHRIS STOKES

Duly authorised by the Franchising Director

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Blood, drugs and no tears

Von Willebrand's disease - hard to detect but fortunately easy to treat - may cause women to have abnormally heavy periods. By Sue Royal

TRADITIONALLY WOMEN with heavy periods often suffered in silence. Now that they are more likely to come forward for treatment, they are providing valuable clues about the incidence of a common bleeding disorder.

Von Willebrand's disease was first identified in 1926 by Erik von Willebrand, a doctor from Finland who noticed a new type of bleeding disorder among people living on a group of islands between Finland and Sweden. Between 1 and 3 per cent of the UK population is thought to suffer from this inherited illness, in which one of the proteins that help blood to clot is at low levels, abnormal or almost absent; but most people have never heard of it.

It affects men and women equally, and can cause heavy periods, nosebleeds, and bleeding after surgery. Sufferers often bruise easily. The good news is that most cases are mild, and easily treatable with drugs or a transfusion of the missing factor. However, it is often difficult to diagnose.

Professor Christine Lee, of the haemophilia centre at the Royal Free Hospital in London, has run a study among women who contacted a gynaecology clinic complaining of heavy periods. She asked them to fill in a pictorial blood loss chart and tested 150 women with heavy loss for bleeding disorders. Of those tested, 13 per cent were found to have von Willebrand's disease.

Prof Lee also discovered that using a nasal spray con-

taining DDAVP (see panel) cut down women's blood loss and the length of their periods. The nasal spray is currently available only from specialist haemophilia treatment centres for named patients, as it is still undergoing clinical trials.

Prof Lee hopes to run a second study into the incidence of von Willebrand's disease among women students at Oxford University. "The trouble with von Willebrand's is that it causes ill health," she says. "People can suffer from anaemia and bleeding after surgery or injury takes longer and requires a site for infection."

Although it affects both sexes, it is more of a problem for women because of the debilitating effect of heavy periods. And although pregnancy raises levels of von Willebrand's to

normal, they can fall quickly after childbirth, and cause haemorrhage. Men don't usually have as many problems, unless they need surgery.

More than 70 per cent of those with von Willebrand's disease have the mild type 1, where there is a low level of the von Willebrand protein. Type 2, where the von Willebrand factor is abnormal or does not work properly, and type 3 where it is almost absent, are more unusual. Type 3, which is more severe, is thought to affect only 1 in a million people.

General testing is "fraught with disaster", says Dr Trevor Baglin, consultant haematologist at the haemophilia centre at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge. An individual's bleeding can be influenced by up to 50 factors, including blood group, fear, stress and preg-

nancy, and the von Willebrand protein level varies in response.

"In some people, even the stress of having the blood test can bring the von Willebrand factor up to normal levels. If a bloke goes out on a football field, and starts running around, his von Willebrand factor could be 100 per cent," Dr Baglin said.

"In surgery, the trouble is that, if you have general anaesthetic and your body is relaxed, your von Willebrand factor may only be 25 per cent."

The answer has always been to take repeated blood tests, which places a burden on overstretched laboratories, and to examine a patient's clinical history. But that could change, as people with von Willebrand's disease could soon benefit from genetic testing.

Doctors at the University of Sheffield's division of molecular and genetic medicine are applying for European funding to develop a genetic test using computers. "We can do the test at the moment, but it is very laborious," said Professor Peake. The von Willebrand gene is large, and finding the defect involves painstakingly sorting through DNA. "If we can find a way of sequencing DNA... so that it is automatic and quick, we can get a precise diagnosis."

But it will be some years before the test is routinely available. "It's like saying you have a car that will go at 200mph. They're expensive to make at first; later on they become more common, and the cost of producing them goes down."

TREATMENTS

Tranexamic acid: Helps stop bleeding by slowing down the body's process of breaking down blood clots.

Taken as a tablet, medicine or mouthwash. May cause stomach upsets.

DDAVP or desmopressin: A copy of the body's hormone which raises the level of von Willebrand protein. Given by drip, injection or nasal spray.

Can cause flushing.

headache and water retention.

Clotting factor concentrates: Given to people with very low levels of the factor or those needing major surgery.

Made of screened plasma from blood donors to replace the missing factor. Von Willebrand patients who need blood products have to be vaccinated against hepatitis A and B.

لسان العزم

MEDIA

Ten years after its launch, Britain's first 24-hour news service has won credibility but hardly any viewers. By Sarah Nathan

Switched on – but Sky has its limits

Sky News, the station that was supposed to break the mould of British broadcast news, is ten years old next week. It may be looking staid and old-fashioned, but it now has a solid reputation for dealing with breaking news fast and well.

After a flurry of building and recruitment, as Rupert Murdoch rushed to beat BSF to the "on" button, the station was launched just six months after it was commissioned.

It was never the channel that was going to make Mr Murdoch millions – but then that was not its purpose. It was there to protect the Murdoch empire from charges of trivialising communications, of being only out for profit, of giving nothing back. One early employee described it as a "heatshield" to deflect criticism from News International's multifaceted operation.

To some extent it has remained that to this day. It was a help, of course, that the then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was such a committed supporter. Early on, she decided to give Sky News, which had initially no viewers, her first big political interview of the year rather than giving it to ITN or the BBC as usual. Indeed after only about a year of transmission, she was reported by Mr Murdoch as describing Sky as "the only unbiased news in the UK."

It was this basic function as a political and PR operation which has kept Sky News going; other Murdoch outlets which cost this much for such a small audience or readership have not had an easy time. Sky News cost around £15 million to set up and had an initial annual budget of about £20 million, but it has never crashed downmarket or introduced gimmicks such as the News Bunny to attract viewers.

Indeed the only begetter of the News Bunny, Kelvin MacKenzie, lasted only a short time at Sky, and

was thought to have left because of his determination to pursue the "weather in Norwegian/Topless Darts" route to an audience – something which would defeat the whole purpose for which Sky News was established in the first place. After some memorable clashes, including one about the outspoken Tory MP Alan Clark's multiple mistresses, Kelvin went off to do it his way.

Rupert Murdoch promoted Sky News as a mould breaker. Just months after its launch he addressed the broadcasting tribe at its annual gathering in Edinburgh and held up Sky News as a model for all news broadcasting. It defended us from bias, he said, because one journalist's opinions would get lost

One source described Sky News as a 'heatshield' to deflect criticism from News International's multifaceted operation

in the acres of coverage. He said channels such as his Sky News were less susceptible to government pressure because they were not dependent on the licence fee and that Sky was more likely to do investigative journalism because it did not need to worry about its state-sponsored privileges. This, when seen in the context of his relationship with Mrs. Thatcher or indeed with current Labour politicians, has a certain irony. Whatever the merits of Sky News today, and there are many, no-one would describe it as a flagship for investigative journalism.

The station now has an aura of undoubted competence in a rather

conservative style. The format is a close relation to American network news, with graphic boxes, a bluish set and endless straps across the bottom of the screen. It may be old-fashioned; the chaps are mostly mature suits, the women serious and not too threatening and there's almost always one of each. There's little graphic gimmickry and no sensation of presenters dominated by a video wall, the new craze on terrestrial television news. But this simplicity liberates the channel to do what it does best: dealing with breaking news fast when it happens.

The Gulf War made rolling news seem like a good idea, and CNN made its reputation, but Sky's particular strength has always been in domestic, human interest stories. It cleared the schedules to bring us Louise Woodward's trial in all its detail – incidentally forcing the terrestrial channels to rethink how much of the trial they would transmit. Its coverage of the Omagh bombing was fast and well-judged. Most recently, the discovery of the two Hastings schoolgirls last Friday was an interesting example of its coverage and one where it is illuminating to compare Sky News and its younger rival: the BBC's News 24.

On Friday, Sky News came over as the establishment. It may have looked staid and secure, but it was fast-moving and enterprising in getting the rejoicing parents on air before anyone else. In a sort of weird role-reversal, the BBC looked the brash, immature newcomer. Its presenters are young and jacket-less.

They sit in a bright playground of a set and you can see the fear in their eyes. Maybe it's the lasting terror of the new technologies used on News 24, but the presenters seem distracted. On Friday one appeared to lack the confidence to listen to what the correspondent was telling him. The correspondent was telling him News 24 may have broadcast the news of a possible breakthrough



Sky News's Adam Boulton about to interview Neil Hamilton, the former Tory MP (top); above (left to right) are screen shots from coverage of the Louise Woodward trial, the Gulf war and the Omagh bombing

Main picture: Tony Buckingham

first, but the presenter never noticed and didn't follow it up. Sky was initially slower – stuck in a business programme – but when they picked up the story they really ran with it, using their correspondent to the full, with background packages and rather repetitive library footage.

The BBC trumpets the Sky News broadcasts are, its audience remains pitifully small. It reaches just over one million people a week on cable and, even in homes with cable, only has a less than one percent share of viewing time. The station's publicity claims it's seen by seven million people a month in

Britain and makes much of its global reach. The first BARB data for News 24 shows it, rather surprisingly, getting similar figures on cable – more encouraging for the BBC with what is still a fledgling service, but not testifying to a huge unassisted appetite for rolling television news. For those working on Sky News, it's just as well the influence and the budget is out of proportion to the number of viewers.

Presenters such as Bob Friend and Adam Boulton pull in newsworthy interviewees and their pro-

grammes are watched in the offices of papers and broadcasters, politicians and lobbyists all over the country. Rather like Channel 5 News, Sky may be content to have influence disproportionate to its viewers.

As long as Rupert Murdoch and his successors are content to take the budgetary rough with the political smooth, there's no reason why the station shouldn't continue for another ten years and more.

Sarah Nathan is the former editor of Channel 4 News

New labours for Chris Powell

How the left's favourite advertising man helped change the Labour Party's image. By Rhys Williams



Chris Powell: 'Advertising is all I have ever done; it's a bit dull to do only one thing' Phil Meech

spected practitioners of his trade.

"Advertising is all I have ever done and it's a bit dull to do only one thing in your life," he explains, insisting that his public sector endeavours are not rooted in altruism, or an attempt to correct the perception of the advertising industry as a conscience-free zone. "Working on a health trust is about as different an agenda as you can get from advertising. It's interesting to work with people, district nurses in the main, much more motivated by the satisfaction of their job."

"But, in the end, I fear I have a butterfly mind. The joy of advertising is that you get to look at so many different problems and put your nose into other people's business."

"It's a fantastic privilege to be able to do that and give your useless opinions to different people. Although I really can't claim I'm running

around doing good works. It's selfish. I'm politically interested and involved. It's the satisfaction of Powell's interests and hobbies."

Powell is a political animal. It runs in the family. His elder brother Charles was Margaret Thatcher's foreign affairs adviser; his younger brother Jonathan is Tony Blair's chief of staff. Powell has been a Labour Party member all his adult life and once ran for the Greater London Council before masterminding BMP's landmark anti-GLC abolition advertising campaign in 1984. The "Say no to say" campaign was never going to prevent abolition, but it alerted Labour to the possibilities of advertising.

"The left had regarded advertising as a tool of right-wing capitalism and something that was there to hurt it rather than help it," says Powell. "I think the right-wing left, such as

Roy Hattersley, had a distaste of advertising, rather an aesthetic distaste, based on a dislike of bra advertising on escalators."

Powell agrees that it was largely on the basis of the GLC work that he and BMP were approached by Peter Mandelson to form the nucleus of the Shadow Communications Agency, first at the 1987 general election, then again five years later.

On both occasions, the winning campaigns belonged to the losing side, a fact which Powell finds reassuring. "It would be a terrible comment on humanity if such things made a huge difference," he says.

"That said, it probably did help see off the SDE. The predictions made with good reason in the mid-Eighties were that Labour would become the third party. No sane person thought Labour would win in 1987, but the campaign ensured it re-

mained the main party of opposition. It gave Labour the feeling of front-footed professionalism."

If Mandelson was the father of New Labour, then Powell was its kindly uncle. So, does someone who has been so intimate with Labour's communications effort have a view on how the recent fuss has undermined the party's ability to stay on message? "Yes, but not in *The Independent*," he says.

Powell is rather more forthcoming about BMP and its 30 years of success. *Campaign* produced a commemorative issue that recalls just how many BMP campaigns, characters and slogans permeated popular culture and passed into the vernacular of their time – "Watch out, watch out, there's a Humphrey about" (Unigate); "It's frothy man" (Cresta); "For mash get smash" (Smash); "Tell 'em about the honey mummy" (Sugar Puffs); and "Follow the bear" (Hollemeister).

Awards and praise have been piled on work for Courage, John Smith's Volkswagen and the Health Education Authority's Aids-awareness campaigns. Like their spokesman for three decades, BMP's work is thoughtful, often understated but highly effective.

Stefano Hatfield, editor of *Campaign*, says: "BMP has always created campaigns that are liked by both the industry and the public. They have an excellent populist touch. Chris sets the tone for the agency's decency. He's not arriviste, so he doesn't raise the hackles. He's self-effacing, but he is evangelical about the power of advertising."

Powell also seems to have a healthy sense of there being more important things in life than advertising. Such as cricket, for example. Legend has it that in the mid-Eighties were that Labour would become the third party. No sane person thought Labour would win in 1987, but the campaign ensured it re-

THE WORD ON THE STREET



was not gratuitous taking into account the shock that Jim McDonald had suffered, the commission concludes. So that's alright then.

STILL, IF

as expected, he ends up with spare time on his hands, Monty will finally have a chance to finish that web site he's been creating between swigs of mineral water at high-powered board meetings. At present, visitors to <http://users.g1.hardnet.com.au/dmone/> are met with the disappointing but strangely intriguing notice that "David Montgomery's Home Page" is still "under construction".

THERE ARE

certain offensive words that everyone

understands should not be

uttered on television before the 9pm watershed – the "s" word

and the "f" word. The word

"bastard" has always been a

tricky one for taste police

across the land however. But at

last comes an official ruling

from the Independent

Television Commission tucked

away in its latest complaints

bulletin. Viewers of *Coronation Street* will recall that Jim McDonald let the word slip during a recent spat with ex-wife Liz over her affair with his occupational therapist. "Its use

is still too risqué for the public.

FORTUNATELY BMP DDB Needham's work is rather more to the point than its name. The agency has just celebrated its 30th anniversary, in some style it has to be said – a record year for creative awards and new business wins, achievements that made it Campaign's least controversial choice as Agency of the Year. It also threw a party.

This is not BMP's style at all. When it launched in 1968, the limit of its ostentation was to insist that the company's name – Boase Massini Pollitt – featured in red letters on its fleet of chocolate-brown Minis. The agency ignored its 10th birthday, held a staff meeting to mark its 20th, and celebrated its quarter-century with a drink (just the one, apparently) and a slice of cake in the office.

The idea of a party was, frankly, alien, much less a celebration that involved packing out the Albert Hall with 5,000 guests and a cake the size of a garden shed. The other significant moment in the whirl of Happy Birthdays was the announcement that Chris Powell, the agency's public face since anyone can remember, was stepping down as chief executive and taking on the more hands-on role of chairman to accommodate his extra-curricular activities.

Mr Powell, among other things, is deputy chairman of the Riverside Community Health Trust, sits on the board of United News and of a local arts council in west London, and is a member of the marketing forum appointed by the New Millennium Experience Company to act as a liaison group on selling the Dome.

"I've been working on projects outside the agency for four or five years now," he says, "and it was getting embarrassing to have the title of chief executive when other people were running the agency."

Powell, 55, joined BMP in 1968. He was appointed to the board in 1972 and made managing director three years later. He is one of the most re-

nown figures of the right-wing press because of his liberal views, but at work he wasn't quite as woolly as has been made out.

Ferman displayed an almost pathological aversion to

opening the BBFC to the public

– probably fearing they're all

Daily Mail readers. And a

Channel 4 documentary to be

screened next month called

The Last Days of the Board

was very nearly killed because

of Ferman's opposition. BBFC president Andreas Whittam Smith is keen to see the BBFC improve its accessibility and so

gave Diverse Productions permission to film. When

Ferman found out he rang to protest: "The president,"

Ferman declared, "is not in a position to give permission."

Ferman was wrong but Diverse

were still kept out of the really

interesting meetings where

examiners deliberated in detail

on films – perhaps feeling that

prim civil servants discussing

who does what to whom with a chicken and a bucket of custard

is still too risqué for the public.

Jeff Randall's *Sunday Business* is proving a success, outflanking its rivals and confounding the sceptics. By Paul McCann

Where the FT meets Loaded

It is typical of Jeff Randall that he conducts his interviews in a greasy spoon cafe called Andrew's. It is on Gray's Inn Road, just down the street from the old offices of his *Sunday Business* newspaper, and this is where this most unpretentious of editors lured many of the 35 journalists who now work to produce his paper.

They sat through what then had to be a sales pitch. Today *Sunday Business* is selling 50,000 copies a week and has gained a reputation for producing not only good stories but also, unlike some broadsheet rivals, stories that are true. Scoops have included the failure of Bernie Ecclestone's Formula 1 bond, and Cadover's bid for Mirror Group last week. After just a year, the paper is well on its way to the projected three-year break-even point of 80,000 sales a week.

But when Randall was recruiting in Andrew's, *Sunday Business* was not an alluring prospect for any but the most desperate journalist. It was started in April 1996 by Tom Rubython, the maverick publisher-journalist, and lurched from one financial catastrophe to another, losing staff and backers while attracting only libel writs. It closed in July 1997, and was relaunched under the Barclay brothers' ownership in February 1998.

"When a newspaper collapses, anyone in a secure job is likely to ask, 'why should I risk my career?'" says Randall, 45, tucking into poached egg on toast and a giant mug of tea. "Senior journalists who knew me understood what I had planned, and believed I could build the trust the paper would need. It was the more junior ones who were wary."

Over multiple fly-ups in Andrew's, Randall built a staff largely from *The Sunday Times*, *The Daily and Sunday Telegraph*, the *Evening Standard* and the *International Herald Tribune*.

Some say now that Randall was the only man who could have made *Sunday Business* rise from the ashes. A former, and almost legendary, editor of *The Sunday*



Jeff Randall: 'We have proved there is a market. I am certainly more confident now than I was a year ago when I was recruiting people'

Neville Elder

Times's business section, unusually in journalism, Randall is both popular and successful. "A lot of people are here just because of him," says one *Sunday Business* journalist. "There is a real consensus in the office that you want to work your guts out for Jeff. Which is just as well, because there is a hell of a lot of space to fill."

Alan Ruddock, editor of *Sunday Business*'s sister paper *The Scotsman*, and a former colleague from *The Sunday Times*, respects what Randall did just in getting together a staff: "At the same time he was recruiting, I was briefly embroiled in the Mirror Group's plans for *Sporting Life*. It seemed to me that per-

suading 50 journalists to leave secure jobs for a start-up title was going to take a very, very long time. But Jeff managed it extremely quickly. It was down to his reputation and powers of persuasion."

Randall built his reputation during the so-called days of the Eighties economic boom. Where other *Sunday Times* business editors had courted the patrician rulers of City finance, Randall cultivated those who epitomised the brash end of the deregulated Eighties business culture: Sir Tim Bell, George Walker, Gerald Ronson, Frank Warren, even poor Gerald Ratner. He used them to produce a string of City scoops, many of them dominating the front

pages of other newspapers, let alone their business pages.

His favourites include Robert Maxwell's attempt to buy Tottenham Hotspur, followed up with Alan Sugar's appearance as Tottenham's saviour, and, oddly, since it was not a business story, the planned closure of London Zoo. Rightly, Randall is renowned as a news junkie: "I know for a fact he was physically depressed for a fortnight because *The Sunday Telegraph* scooped him on Murdoch buying Manchester United," says a friend.

He started in journalism on a postgraduate course at the University of Florida where he was advised to specialise on, and, with a

degree in economics, decided to stick to business journalism.

His first job was on a magazine covering the arcane world of airline financing. After a stint on the *Financial Weekly*, he made it to *The Sunday Telegraph* as a City correspondent. In 1988 he became assistant city editor of *The Sunday Times*. He worked his way to managing editor of business news, which came with a seat at the News International monthly board meeting: "Where I got to watch the maestro, Rupert Murdoch," he says.

Having promised himself he would give up journalism at the age of 40, Randall left *The Sunday Times* for City PR firm Financial

Dynamics. Despite a £200,000-plus package he was bored, and six months later took a pay cut to return to *The Sunday Times*, as assistant editor and later sports editor, before the Barclay brothers and their editor-in-chief, Andrew Neil, offered him the editorship of *Sunday Business*.

"It was important to me that the Barclay brothers seemed to understand what was needed. History is littered with newspaper start-ups which were under-capitalised. They all accepted the most optimistic predictions of their distribution, future sales and revenues. There was never any money for rainy days – and rivals such as Murdoch can make sure that rain happens. The Barclay

brothers had an understanding of what was needed – and they've got deep pockets."

Randall was unconcerned that there was no research showing enthusiasm for the paper. "There is no point researching a new market, because consumers say they are more conservative than they really are. Pre-launch research would have told Murdoch that people weren't willing to pay to watch sport and movies on television."

Now Randall has figures to prove his hunch that there are at least 80,000 business junkies in the country, and he uses them like the salesman he is: "The FT sells 160,000 in the UK, and we have 25% of its market after 45 weeks – and the FT's been going 100 years. *The Wall Street Journal* has been operating in the UK for 15 years, and has just 15,000 UK readers. So I think we have proved there is a market. I am certainly more confident now than I was a year ago when I was recruiting people."

Randall's growing confidence should see some changes made to the paper. Staff report that at the beginning he was so desperate to dispel the paper's reputation for running poorly sourced stories that everything had to be "triple copper-bottomed with belt and braces". The paper was at first, he admits, deliberately boring, so that it could re-establish its credibility. The paper was given authority in part by its classy redesign at the hands of the Scotsman Group's in-house design team, Aly Palmer, design editor of *The Scotsman*, and John Belknap produced a clean and modern-looking title. Now Randall is promising rather more "attitude" and intends to deliver a paper where "the FT meets Loaded".

A year ago, such was *Sunday Business*'s reputation that Tesco refused to stock it – until Randall phoned Terry Leahy, Tesco's chief executive, and got it on the shelves. On 27 December last year, when the financial markets and much of the country had been closed for four days, 45,000 people still went out and bought *Sunday Business*.

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ANALYSIS

RICHARD COOK

A touch of gold from Fools and Horses

IN THE beginning was *The Colditz Story*, and frankly it wasn't much good at all. But six years ago this tale of studio-bound wartime resistance was a highlight on the cable and satellite channel UK Gold.

UK Gold was supposed to be a highlights channel, giving viewers another chance to savour the BBC's and Thames Television's finest hours. But the reality was rather different. UK Gold was limited by an agreement with the BBC to show nothing fresher than two years old, and a budget that seemed to let it buy almost nothing newer than 22 years old.

"Calling it UK Gold was considerably stretching a point," agrees Ian Lewis, head of programme evaluation at Zenith Media, the UK's largest media buying agency. "It wasn't above the UK Copper level."

But no more. These days UK Gold is on a roll, it seems. Confirmation of this comes from the Christmas viewing figures.

Christmas is a time when TV viewers traditionally turn away from the arriviste cable and satellite channels for a home-tried-and-tested diet of Christmas specials and Pick of the Year shows.

However, last year during Christmas week the terrestrial channels registered a 2 per cent decline in viewing figures, while the whole of satellite and cable fell by 5 per cent. UK Gold, on the other hand, saw its Christmas week ratings rise by over 20 per cent. In fact a total of 6.5 million adults watched the station over the week.

The numbers are improving from a still-small base, of course – the top-rated show the channel has ever shown attracted just over half a million viewers. However, there is no doubt that this initially much-mocked station is now finding an audience.

More important is the fact that UK Gold is now the leading light in the BBC and *Flexi-tech* joint venture UKTV, in the vanguard of the Beeb's

ambitious passage into a new world of commercial satellite and digital television. It is, in fact, the second most popular channel of all those available on cable and satellite, ahead of the sports and movie channels, the children's channels and behind only Sky One in terms of audience

programmes, where before we had to wait two years after transmission," says UKTV's chief executive officer, Dick Emery. "And, though the newer they are the more they cost us, it has meant that we can now show great programmes such as *Only Fools and Horses* and *Men Behaving Badly*."

"We are now starting to think of ourselves as the sixth network," adds Emery. "We even launched a big advertising campaign before Christmas, and still only make a tiny operating profit, as we're pushing back revenues into better and better programmes."

For once viewers and advertisers seem to agree with the hype. "It's hard not to say that the BBC has finally got it right with UK Gold," agrees Paul van Barthold, a director of the Media Business advertising group. "If you didn't think there was a place for a quality repeats channel in the multi-channel environment, just consider this. On the *Electronic Programme Guide* that viewers use to pick between their 200 digital channels on Sky Digital, UK Gold is one of the choices listed on the very front page, along with BBC1 and ITV and the other major players."

numbers. In addition its audience is among the most affluent of satellite TV' viewers, something that has helped push up the station's advertising revenue by 25 per cent over the past 12 months.

"The biggest change happened last year, so that we have now got access to all BBC

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ODEON STUDIO (0870 050007) BR/**E** Richmond 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 5.30pm, 9.20pm **Enemy Of The State** [18] Sun 3.30pm, 9pm **The Mask Of Zorro** 12.30pm, 6.10pm **Meet Joe Black** 12.20pm, 4.30pm, 8.20pm **The Siege** 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

RIMFORD ABC (0870-9020419) BR: Rimford Meet Joe Black 2.20pm, 7.20pm **Practical Magic** 3.30pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm **The Siege** 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705 00007) BR: Rimford **Enemy Of The State** 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm **Little Voice** 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm **The Mask Of Zorro** 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm **Meet Joe Black** 12.30pm, 4pm, 7.30pm **The Parent Trap** 12.45pm, 3.30pm **Practical Magic** 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm **Psycho** 6.30pm, 8.30pm **The Siege** 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.55pm, 8.20pm **Star Trek: Insurrection** 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

SIDCUP ABC (0541-555131) BR: Sidcup **Little Voice** 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm **Meet Joe Black** 3.15pm, 7.15pm

STAPLES CORNER VIRGIN (0870-9070717) BR: Cricklewood Bulwirth 1.15pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm **Enemy Of The State** 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm **Little Voice** 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm **Meet Joe Black** 12.45pm, 4.30pm, 8.15pm **Practical Magic** 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm **The Siege** 1.30pm, 4.05pm, 6pm, 8.35pm, 9.15pm

STREATHAM ABC (0870-9020415) BR: Streatham Hill Antz 1, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm **Little Voice** 1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.20pm **The Prince Of Egypt** 1.50pm **Psycho** 2.20pm, 5.55pm, 8.25pm **Star Trek: Insurrection** 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ODEON (08705 00007) BR: Streatham Hill/Brixton/Clapham Common Bulwirth 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm **Enemy Of The State** 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.25pm **Little Voice** 1.20pm, 3.45pm, 6pm, 8.20pm **Practical Magic** 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm **The Siege** 1pm, 3.15pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

STRATFORD NEW STRATFORD PICTURE HOUSE (0181-555 3366) BR/G Stratford East Bulwirth 4pm, 6.50pm, 9.10pm **Little Voice** 1.35pm, 4.15pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm **Meet Joe Black** 1.15pm, 4.55pm, 8.15pm **Practical Magic** 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.35pm, 9pm **The Siege** 4.40pm, 9.30pm **Star Trek: Insurrection** 3.30pm, 9.20pm

SURREY QUAYS UCI (0990-882890) BR: Surrey Quays 10am-4pm, 7.10pm, 9.50pm **Enemy Of The State** 3pm, 5.50pm **Little Voice** 4.45pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm **The Mask Of Zorro** 3.40pm **Meet Joe Black** 4.30pm, 8.10pm **The Opposite Of Sex** 4.50pm, 9.40pm **Practical Magic** 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm **Rounders** 3.30pm, 6.30pm **The Siege** 4.40pm, 9.30pm **Star Trek: Insurrection** 3.30pm, 9.20pm

SUTTON UCI 6 (0990-882890) BR: Sutton **Morden Enemy Of The State** 3.15pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm **Little Voice** 4.15pm, 6.40pm, 9pm **The Mask Of Zorro** 3.30pm **Meet Joe Black** 6.45pm, 8.30pm **The Opposite Of Sex** 4.50pm, 9.40pm **Practical Magic** 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm **Rounders** 3.30pm, 6.30pm **The Siege** 4.40pm, 9.30pm **Star Trek: Insurrection** 3.30pm, 9.20pm

TURPIN LANE CORONET (0181-882 2519) BR: Turpin Lane **Enemy Of The State** 5.45pm, 8.20pm **Meet Joe Black** 3.30pm, 7.25pm **The Siege** 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

UNDERIDGE ODEON (08705 00007) BR: Underidge **Meet Joe Black** 1.15pm, 5.55pm, 7.35pm **Practical Magic** 1pm, 4pm, 6.25pm, 8.50pm

WALTHAMSTOW ABC (0870-9020424) BR: Walthamstow Central **Little Voice** 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm **Meet Joe Black** 2.10pm, 7.20pm **Psycho** 2pm, 5.10pm, 8.20pm

WALTON ON THAMES THE SCREEN AT WALTON (01932-252825) BR: Walton on Thames **Little Voice** 3.30pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm **Meet Joe Black** 3pm, 7.15pm

WELL HALL CORONET (0181-850 3351) BR: Eltham **Enemy Of The State** 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm **Little Voice** 3pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

WILLESDEN BELLE-VUE (0181-830 0822) BR: Willesden Green **The Prince Of Egypt** 4.45pm **Psycho** 6.30pm, 9pm

WIMBLEDON ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Wimbledon/E South Wimbledon **Enemy Of The State** 2.30pm, 3.25pm, 8.20pm **Little Voice** 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm **Meet Joe Black** 2.20pm, 7.30pm **The Siege** 2.40pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm

WOODFORD ABC (0181-889 3463) BR: South Woodford **Little Voice** 2.10pm, 4pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm **Meet Joe Black** 2.30pm, 7.30pm **The Siege** 2.40pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm

WOOLWICH CORONET (0181-854 5043) BR: Woolwich Arsenal **The Mask Of Zorro** 4pm, 8.10pm **Practical Magic** 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

WYKES ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Wykies **Antz** (PG) **Babe: Pig In The City** (U) **Big** (PG) **Little Voice** (PG) **Meet Joe Black** (PG) **Psycho** (U) **Star Trek: Insurrection** (PG)

ZENITH SHOWCASE (0117-9723800) 54 (15): **Antz** (PG); **The Acid House** (18) **Antz** (PG); **Babe: Pig In The City** (U); **Bulwirth** (18); **Enemy Of The State** 15pm; **Little Voice** 3.50pm, 5.45pm **Meet Joe Black** 6.45pm, 8.30pm **The Opposite Of Sex** 4.50pm, 9.40pm **Practical Magic** 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm **Rounders** 7pm **The Siege** 9.30pm **Star Trek: Insurrection** (PG)

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TUESDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM)
6.30 Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo.
12.00 Kevin Greening 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Chris Moyles 5.45 Newsbeat 6.00 Clive Waren.
8.00 Steve Lamacq - the Evening Session 10.00 Digital Update.
11.40 John Peel 12.00 The Breeze-block 2.00 Emma B. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.

RADIO 2
(88.9-92.1MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce.
12.00 Jimmy Young 2.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Alan Freeman: Their Greatest Bits 8.00 Nigel Ogden 9.00 Our Pet - 50 Years in Showbiz. See Pick of the Day. 10.00 Susan Jeffreys Says Make It A Double 12.30 Richard Allison 12.00 Katrina Leskanich 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.

RADIO 3
(90.2-94MHz FM)
6.00 On Air.
9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week.
11.00 Sound Stories.
12.00 Composer of the Week:
Taverner.
1.00 The Radio 3 Luncheon Concert.
2.00 The BBC Orchestras.
4.00 Voices.
4.45 Music Machine.
5.00 In Tune.

7.30 Performance on 3. A rare opportunity to hear Handel's sparkling serenata 'Il Parnasso in festa' - composed to celebrate a royal wedding in 1734 - in a performance recorded at the 1997 London Festival. Mairi Lawson, Jeni Bern and Joanne Lunn (sopranos), Deborah Miles-Johnson and Catherine King (mezzos), Stephen Varcoe (bass), London Handel Orchestra/Denis Darlow.
8.35 Postscript. Five programmes in which the work of a writer from the past who argued with passion for change is introduced by a contemporary outspoken voice. 2: Sir Stephen Tunbridge introduces extracts from George Orwell's essay 'Politics and the English Language'. Reader Samuel West.
10.20 Night Visions. The first recording of this recent piece by Matthew Taylor, played by the Camp Ensemble.

PICK OF THE DAY

COR BLIMEY GUVERNOR, a new comedy drama about a cheeky Cockney con-man, whisked out of prison to serve the rest of his sentence rehabilitating a community centre on a riot-torn council estate. Jim Eldridge's Coming Alive (11.30am R4) certainly tries to palm you off with a few dodgy stereotypes (Karl Howman, in the lead, loud-hailers every line), but it has an immediately persuasive charm.

Our Pet (6pm R2) is not a homage to a hamster but a thoughtful tribute to the biggest selling British female singer to date, Petula Clark (right), who has now had 50 years "in the business". Sir Peter Ustinov and Honor Blackman are among those providing useful links between the star and her music.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

10.45 Night Waves. How far is it possible for a country to expose the full truth of its recent history?

Richard Coles talks to leading South African poet and journalist Antjie Krog, whose new book, 'Country of My Skull', gives a powerful account of the aims and achievements of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He also discusses a new exhibition of African photography since the 1920s which offers an intimate view of social life in Africa. Plus news and comment on tonight's announcement of the Whitbread Book Awards.

11.30 Jazz Notes. Written and performed by Rikkie Beadle-Blair with David Squire, Director Jeremy Mortimer (2/10).

8.00 NEWS: File on 4. Doctors in the United States say more than a hundred thousand people die there every year because of adverse reactions to prescribed medicines. Mark Whittaker investigates the scale of the problem in Britain and asks why we know so little about what could be one of the country's biggest killers.

8.40 In Touch. Peter White with news for visually impaired people. 9.00 NEWS: The New Healers. Gene therapy promises amazing breakthroughs in the treatment of human diseases. Rita Carter investigates the practical and ethical difficulties involved.

9.30 No Triumph, No Tragedy. Disabled achievers in the United States talk frankly to Peter White about how their disabilities have affected their lives.

10.00 The World Tonight. With Anne McKenzie. 4.00 NEWS: This Sceptred Isle. With Anne McKenzie.

4.30 Shop Talk. 5.00 PM.
5.57 Weather.
6.00 Six O'Clock News.
6.30 The Cheese Shop Presents: the Butter Factor.
7.00 NEWS: The Archers.
7.15 Front Row: Mark Lawson with the arts programme, including an investigation into the relationship between piano teacher and pupil - a time of inspiration and self-expression, fear and loathing across the keys?

7.45 Inner Voices. Finders Keepers. Written and performed by Rikkie Beadle-Blair with David Squire, Director Jeremy Mortimer (2/10).

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10.00 The World Tonight. With Anne McKenzie.

4.00 NEWS: The Learning Curve.



RADIO 5 LIVE

(89.2, 90kHz MW)
6.00 Breakfast.
9.00 Nicky Campbell.
12.00 The Midday News.
1.00 Ruscoe and Co. Fi Glover and the 5 Live team present live reports from the big news and sports events of the day, including Moneycheck, and Fi's guests in conversation.
4.00 Drive. Peter Allen and Jane Garvey with news and sport. UK travel updates every 15 minutes with Lynn Bowles.

7.00 News Extra.
7.30 The Tuesday Match. Russell Fuller presents coverage of all the night's top football action, including the first leg of the Worthington Cup semi-final between Sunderland and Leicester.

10.00 Late Night Live. The day's big stories with Nick Robinson. Including 10.30 a full sports round-up. 11.00 News and finance. And between 11.30 and 1.00 a sharp and spirited late-night topical discussion.

1.00 Up All Night.

5.00 Morning Reports.

CLOCK FM
(100.1-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Nick Bailey. 8.00 Henry Kelly.
12.00 Requeste 2.00 Concerto.
3.00 Jamie Clegg. 6.30 Newsnight.
7.00 Sunday Classics at Seven.
9.00 Evening Concert. 11.00 Alan Mann. 2.00 Concerto. 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

VIRGIN RADIO

(121.7-122.9MHz MW 105.8MHz FM)

6.30 Chris Evans. 9.30 Mark Forrest.

1.00 Nick Abbott. 4.00 Harriet Scott. 7.30 Pete & Geoff. 10.00 James Merritt. 1.00 Steve Power.

4.30 - 6.30 Richard Allen.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO

(198kHz LW)

1.00 The World Today. 1.30 On Screen. 1.45 Record News. 2.00 The World Today. 2.30 Women Who Dared to Speak. 3.00 The World Today. 3.20 Sports Roundup. 3.30 World Business Report. 3.45 Insight. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today. 4.00 - 7.00 Farming Today.

TALK RADIO

6.00 Big Boys Breakfast with David and Nick Ferrall. 9.00 Scott Chisholm. 1.00 Anna Raesum. 3.00 Peter Dealey. 5.00 The SportZone.

7.00 Eubank's People. 8.00 James Whale. 1.00 - 6.00 Ian Collins.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

The favourites Slough further set their mark on the Four Nations Chess League (4NCL) at the weekend with two victories which left them a massive four points clear after six of the eleven rounds.

A seven-one win against Richmond on Saturday was followed by the much tougher match against my club, Wood Green, on Sunday - who had done ourselves no favours with a lackadaisical performance against Wexham resulting (just) in a 4-all draw, but were still clear second.

Playing Black, I was happy to accept when Tony Miles offered me a draw still in the opening. Further draws followed with a single Slough victory but the match still seemed close after three hours or so since we had pressure on a couple of boards, especially Malcolm Pein's. In repeating moves in a much superior ending to reach the time control, however, Pein did so once too often, allowing Colin McNab to claim a draw. (His misery was complete, poor man, when he learnt that minutes earlier, his beloved Liverpool had let in two late goals to be ejected from the FA Cup by Manchester United.)

After about five hours' play there were just two games left, in each of which we were the exchange up and in each of which we were in serious trouble. Although both were saved

White: Tony Miles

Black: Gavin Wall

4NCL1999

English Opening

1 c4 g6 9 d5 Nfd5

2 e4 e5 10 Bg5 Qd7

3 d4 Nf6 11 a5 b5?

4 Nf3 Nxe4 12 Be4 c4

5 Bd3 Bb4+ 13 Qc2 Ba5?

6 Kf1 d5 14 Nc1 Bxcl?

7 Qb3 c5? 15 Bxd5 1-0

8 cxd5 Nf6

CREATIVITY

LOKI

MORE LEAP-SECOND Knock-On Consequences: John Harvey rechuckles Cornwall's eclipse as that asteroid arrives early and blots out sunlight for 20 minutes every hour, causing an entire new strain of mad cow disease. And Nigel Plevin is now telepathic, foreseeing Loki's Stonehenge realignment, Caria's space-time continuum and John's asteroid.

Pierre de Fermat regards the space as an ample margin in which to write a marvelous proof of a theorem he has discovered, and thereby cure Martha Maddox's headaches for the next 300 years. Bruce Birchall would fill it with Bayeux Tapestry pictures depicting famous Pursuits: Galahad and the Holy Grail, William Rufus and the wild boar, St George and the dragon. Susan Tomes would cut out the empty column, erect it in Trafalgar Square, stand on it, and become an instant tourist attraction. (Grapple fans might quite like a half-Nelson?)

Photographic ideas were Paul Turner with snaps of Creativity print when there is no news? And specifically, how do you use a 450-word Creativity column in a week with no contributions?

Minnie & Mal Liszt suggest an aesthetically white space, achieved by typing 2,700 consecutive space bars (taking five characters to be a type-setter's notional "word"); Martin Brown donates the space to the European Space Agency to explore; Oliver Reed builds a space station with 2,700 space bars; Jack Straw makes it a free-fall Devil's Island, with 2,700 space bars on the only window. Les Dawson suggests a game of Blankety-Blank, in which his guests would be Raymond Briggs's The Snowman, The Great White Hope, a polar bear, Caspar the Ghost, a White Russian and The Invisible Man, who would all wear blank expressions and be paid with blank cheques.

David Ridge would fill it with pictures of mermaids and their irresistible songs; Nic Coidan with join-the-dots puzzles; Rory Jacques with ink blots; Amanda L Brock and Julie Orsett with fractals; Roland de Dyce with a Snakes and Ladders board; Maguy Higgs

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CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3829 Tuesday 26 January

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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | | | 9 | | | |
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| 13 | | | 14 | 15 | | |
| 17 | | 18 | | 16 | | 19 |
| 20 | | | 21 | 22 | | |
| 23 | | | 24 | | | |

ACROSS

1. Wage packet enclosure (7)
2. Plate for consecrated bread (5)
3. Explosive ingredient (5)
4. Accommodation (7)
5. In an undertone (5,4)
6. Insect (3)
7. Merciful (6)
8. Mammary gland (6)
9. Mass of fish eggs (3)
10. Vote in again (2-5)
11. Source of wisdom (6)
12. Flexible (7)
13. Joint (5)
14. Quarrel (5)
15. Hold spellbound (7)

DOWN

1. Underwear (5)
2. Still (3)
3. Take a rest (3,4)
4. Whiteness (6)
5. Clergyman (5)
6. Rear part of truck (9)
7. Leave untended (7)
8. Seal belt (7)
9. Mayday (7)
10. 12.35 Mayday (7)
11. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262.

ROBERT HANKS

TELEVISION REVIEW



THESE ARE SOME things which are almost impossible for television to represent adequately on the screen – arguably ill or illus important ones, too much of life either has to be toned down for reasons of taste or ends up looking clumsy, ridiculous or simply dull.

To coincide with the report of the North Wales child abuse tribunal, Place of Safety (BBC2) surveyed the scandal and the reasons it took so long to come to light. A succession of victims, mainly men, mainly in early middle-age, recalled the treatment they were subjected to while "in care" in homes in North Wales. Beatings and rape were routine, along with a variety of other forms of violence and sexual abuse. There was no relief from this regime. One boy sent to Ewenny Bay, the home outside Wrexham which was the centre of his allegations, had been warned by his older brother, a previous inmate, about what to expect. He simply turned their attention to other younger boys. Others tried summarising the endless authorities, including the police, but were simply overwhelmed.

In 1984, Bryn Estyn was closed down because of local authority reorganisation, and members of staff were re-employed elsewhere in the North Wales childcare system.

We heard of one children's home run on a regime of beatings and blowjobs; of a childcare worker who got into trouble after being found in a girls' dormitory, but still got references which enabled him to get another job where he

reaped a number of young girls. One abuser was described as having learned: "Imagine a Tony Blair running a girls' home."

In 1988 – following the death of a 5-year-old boy, Alan Taylor, a social worker, began to doubt the efficacy of the care system. After failing to children in care, she realigned her priorities and was widowed in local authority homes throughout North Wales. When she took her case to the police, they dismissed it on the grounds that she was sedulous and subservient, and had possibly even brought children to invent stories for her own convenience. She was subsequently sacked by social services for "gross misconduct". Eventually some allegations were taken seriously. Sevier

try to show on television.

councillors in Clwyd began piecing together information, and realised what had been going on. Several men were tried and convicted. An inquiry was set up to uncover the whole story, but its findings were not published, apparently because the council's insurers were wary of attracting compensation claims. Even now that the Welsh Office tribunal is publishing a full report, some victims are dissatisfied that they were not allowed to name all the names they named to, and there are suggestions that the North Wales homes were part of a national network of paedophiles.

Wynford Jones's film was mostly content to tell the story straight, letting witnesses say what they had seen. But, at times, the programme became disjointed and emotive – beauty, mischievously comic, shots of sunlight on hills and woodlands backdrops. There was a sense of unease, of unwillingness to let the viewer go away and draw it over. Instead, you had to be appalled on the spot. Well, I was appalled; but also felt a little manipulated, and unhappy that the programme failed to elicit outrage from out of me.

The Vice (ITV) has a different way of presenting the viewer to moral indignation: it just turns on an policeman

Ken Sloot, slightly perturbed by Terry's agent behaviour, but surely terry's behaviour is never short of puzzling. (S) (T07).

7.30 EastEnders. The day of the inquest, and Ian is puzzeled by Terry's agent behaviour. But surely terry's behaviour is never short of puzzling. (S) (T07).

8.00 Holiday. The trial beach resort of Krali, a family holiday in Cyprus, a rock-horror weekend in Birmingham-on-Sea and the delights of Chicago (S) (T07).

8.30 Regional News (T) (T08).

9.00 News Weather (T) (T07).

9.30 Holiday. The trial beach resort of Krali, a family holiday in Cyprus, a rock-horror weekend in Birmingham-on-

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